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**A study of lexical and semantic change in the expression of the idea of poverty in early medieval English, with reference to intra- and extra-linguistic influences**

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A study of lexical and semantic change  
in the expression of the idea of poverty  
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to intra- and extra- linguistic features

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## Abstract

This is a study of the vocabulary of poverty in early medieval English. It is a diachronic study in that the focus is the change in the vocabulary from Old English into early Middle English. However texts from different times within this span, different genres and geographical areas are presented as a series of slices so that the vocabularies of the particular texts can be compared. The starting point for the identification of the vocabulary of poverty in Old English is that of the *Thesaurus of Old English* category **15.01.06 Poverty**. These words are present in all the data through the study, even in texts in which they have moved away from the meaning 'poverty' so that their change over time, place and genre can be traced. Additional words are added, which carry the meaning 'poverty', as they appear in the texts.

The identification of the particular words which carry the meaning 'poverty' in a text is established through criteria which derive from the assumption that words define their meaning by their context and their relationship to other words. Glossaries and dictionary definitions are used, but in addition context, collocation, synonym or partial synonym and antonym are the criteria for the inclusion of words in the poverty vocabulary for individual texts or groups of texts. Associative and connotative meanings are considered to be an important part of the meaning of a word, as are other senses that the words express, so that there is a sense of the other meanings which the words bring to the context.

The assumption is made that linguistic factors cannot be divorced from extralinguistic factors in the process of language change, and that the connotative and associative elements of the individual words in their context carry cultural and social information which is an important part of the frame of the word in the text and of language choice and change.

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Despite the help I have received, all the errors that remain are entirely my own.

## List of Abbreviations

<i>AW</i>	<i>Ancrene Wisse</i> and its various textual forms.
B	Bodleian MS 34
EETS	Early English Text Society
eME	early Middle English
<i>HM</i>	<i>Hali Meiðhad</i>
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>Lof Lauerd</i>	<i>Lofsong of ure Louerde</i>
ME	Middle English
<i>MED</i>	<i>The Middle English Dictionary</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae historica</i> ; MGH, <i>SS Scriptores</i> , 32 vols. (Hanover, 1826-1934)
<i>MLR</i>	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
OE	Old English
<i>OED</i>	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OFr	Old French
ON	Old Norse
PDE	Present Day English
R	British Library, London, MS Royal 17 A. xxvii
<i>St Iu</i>	<i>Saint Iulienne</i>
<i>St K</i>	<i>Saint Katerine</i> ;
<i>St M</i>	<i>Saint Margaret</i>
<i>SW</i>	<i>Sawles Warde</i>
<i>TOE</i>	<i>The Thesaurus of Old English</i>
<i>Ureisun [L]</i>	<i>Ureisun of Ure Louerde</i>



*Wohunge*      *Pe Wohunge of Ure Lauerd*

Citations from the texts are taken from the following editions:

*Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series* ed. Clemoes, P. EETS ss 17

*Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series* ed. Godden, M. EETS ss 5

*The Peterborough Chronicle*: Irvine, S. ed. Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS E

*Old English Homilies Series I, Parts I and II* ed. Morris, R. EETS os 29, 34

*An Old English Miscellany* ed. Morris, R. EETS os 49

*Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century Series II* ed. Morris, R. EETS os 53

*Lazamon Brut* eds. Brook and Leslie vol. I EETS 250, vol. II EETS 277

*The Ormulum* ed. Holt, Rev. Robert, M. A. with the notes and glossary of Dr. R.

M. White vols I and II

*Ancrene Wisse: CCCC MS 402* eds. Tolkien, J. R. R. and Ker, N. R. EETS 249

(I have treated this as the main text for AW. )

*The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe: BM. MS. Cotton Nero A.xiv* ed. Day, M.

EETS os 225

*Saint Katerine*: Dobson, E. J. and d'Ardenne, S. R. T. O. eds. EETS ss 7

*Pe Liflade ant te Passiun of Seinte Iulienne* ed. d'Ardenne

*Saint Marherete* ed. Mack, F. M. EETS os 193

*Hali Meiðhad* ed. Millett, B. EETS os 284

*Sawles Warde*: Millett, B and Wogan Browne *Medieval English Prose for Women*

*Wohunge* and the other works in the *Wooing Group*: Thompson, W. M. ed. 1958 *Pe*

*Wohunge of Ure Lauerd* EETS Oxford, Oxford University Press.

I have provided translations of the citations. These are my own but additional sources for these are the translations by Allen, Barron and Weinberg, Morris, Salu, White, Wogan-Browne and Millett (see bibliography).

# 1. Introduction

The focus of this thesis is the change that occurs to the Old English 'poverty' category, as identified in the *TOE*, during the first centuries after the Norman Conquest. The questions asked are whether there is a comparatively high level of lexical remodelling, what the process and factors are in this process and what, if anything, can be learned from these changes about the contemporary views of the concept 'poverty'.

I have used evidence from dictionaries and thesauri which provide an overview of the changes in lexis through the Old English to early Middle English period with reference to some of the texts which highlight issues which arise through the changing nature of the vocabulary. The thesaurus evidence also allows an examination of the relationships between the words in the poverty category within other categories. I have examined some of the lexis replacement in Ælfric's work in early Middle English with a more detailed examination of three versions of *The Twelve Abuses* because the content of this text is particularly rich in discussion of both voluntary and involuntary poverty. I have then concentrated on individual texts and groups of texts to explore more specific, text based vocabularies of poverty with a focus on the lexical relationships in context. The texts I have chosen to examine in more detail were chosen because they were composed in the early Middle English period and were not reworkings of earlier texts. These are the Interpolations and Continuations in *The Peterborough Chronicle*, *The Ormulum*, Lazamon's *Brut* and the group of texts known as the AB texts.

## Why poverty?

This study began as an exploration of the items in the *Thesaurus of Old English (TOE)* category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** (Roberts and Kay 2000: 645). It became apparent that while work has been done on the poor and the idea of poverty for this



period, there has not been a similar focus on the associated vocabulary. This vocabulary undergoes considerable change during the period from Old English to early Middle English. Existing English words move in or out of the category and new words from other languages, Old Norse and Old French, enter.

This study considers the changing category and concept of 'poverty' from Old English into early Middle English. The framework will be a diachronic study of the vocabulary, but presented through a series of synchronic slices. The items in the vocabulary of the Thesaurus of Old English category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** (see Appendix 1) form a core vocabulary and I track their change over time, adding to this group the items that join the poverty vocabulary in each text or textual group that is studied. Specific vocabularies of poverty emerge, which are influenced by changing time and region; for example in early Middle English the vocabulary that emerges from the AB texts is different in detail from the vocabulary that emerges from Lazamon's *Brut* which is roughly contemporary in terms both of time and place. I aim to identify the separate vocabularies which express the concept 'poverty' for each text, or textual group, that is studied as well as to identify an overall vocabulary of poverty for the texts as a corpus. The separate vocabularies will be able to be seen in relation to each other, as well as in relation to the overall vocabulary for the Old English to early Middle English period, as presented through my study and the materials in the *Historical Thesaurus of English* currently being undertaken at Glasgow by Christian Kay and others.

An examination of **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** in the *TOE* shows how extensive the lexical remodelling of this category has been between the Old English period and now. In the *TOE* category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** there are eighteen OE items in the head category **Poverty, indigence**, none of which are in current use and many of which were no longer in the category by the late thirteenth century. 'Need' is the only current English word from the PDE category headings which also appears in the Old English category, as *nīed. Nacod*, although still in use as *naked*, does not appear

in the headings although one of its definitions ‘without clothing’ does. Neither *nīed* nor *nacod* appear to play a large part in the Old English category as each appears only once. *Nīed* appears in the phrase *nīed habban* but, as shown later, *nīed* shifts its sense in the early Middle English period and moves further into the field. *Nacod* appears under **..Lacking clothing, poor, needy** and while it does not itself appear in the category headings in PDE it does still retain an associative connection with the category.<sup>1</sup> Apart from these instances this Old English category with its total of sixty seven items is wholly replaced.<sup>2</sup>

The item which came to dominate the category by the early thirteenth century and which still dominates in PDE is ‘poor’. This appears in its earliest recorded use in the early Middle English period as *poure* in the MED as a1225(?a?1200) *Trinity Homilies* (Trin-C B.14.52) 47: *Hie..brohte þat child mid hire in to þe temple and offredde loc for him..gif hie was riche wimman, a lomb..gif hie was poure, two duue briddes. Poure* seems relatively quickly to become a central item in the field. The Old English category was dominated by two central words - *þearf* and *wædle* and their forms. In the Old English category there are seventeen items connected to *þearf*<sup>3</sup> and ten items connected to *wædle*.<sup>4</sup> The transition of the central area from *þearf* and *wædle* to *poure* and its forms was not, however, direct. There was a period from late Old English to early Middle English in which another OE word, *wrecche* and its forms, moved in from outside the *TOE* ‘poverty’ category to become a central word, used in texts to

<sup>1</sup> OED sense 3a ‘Destitute of clothing (implying poverty and wretchedness) has its latest citation from Dryden 1697, and the citation from Shakespeare’s *King Lear* iii iv 28 contains three of the eME poverty words in collocation: *Poore naked wretches . . . That bide the pelting of this pittillesse storm*. The most recent citation in the OED of sense 3.b. ‘Bare or destitute of means’ is 1893 Stevenson *Catriona* v. *I am held naked in my prison*

<sup>2</sup> This total of sixty seven counts every entry so that the same word appearing in two senses in separate subcategories counts as two, as do two forms of the same word appearing as two sense entries. If different forms from the same lexical root are counted together as one, there are eight lexical roots which each appear in various forms - for example *wædl*, *wædla*, *wædlian*, and there are seventeen words that appear once only. There are twenty-five different lexical roots in total.

<sup>3</sup> Eighteen if *þurfan* is counted.

<sup>4</sup> Eleven if *wepelnes* is counted



replace both *þearf* and *wædle*. The question arises - what were the pressures that led to the disuse of *wædle* and the restriction, and subsequent disuse, of *þearf* and the movement into the centre of *wrecche*? Did a gap develop which *wrecche* filled or did *wrecche* extend its space, so was this a push chain or a pull chain process as described by Samuels (1972)? Were there circumstances which put pressure on the existing vocabulary which led to the shift into the category of *wrecche*, even though this shift did not fully satisfy the need for change so that *wrecche* proved a relatively short lived solution? The subsequent adjustment which resulted in the dominance of *poure* from Old French also raises questions. If, as Smith suggests (1996: 125), a precondition of borrowing is that a role must be seen for the alien form in the receiving language, what is the role that is seen for *poure* when OE words already existed to express the concept, one of which had relatively recently moved in to supplant the existing ones? What is the gap that *wrecche* filled and what was it that made it relatively short lived, to be replaced by a loan word? While it may never be possible to provide definitive answers to these kinds of questions, this study will shed some light on the process in practice and may go some way towards identifying some of the factors in the process.

These are great changes from the Old English 'poverty' category to the early Middle English category. However, many categories undergo change during this period, when words from Norse and French appear in greater numbers in the English written record (Serjeantson 1961: 63/104). In descriptions of the historical development of English various factors are identified that influence lexical borrowing such as the need to express a concept or item that has not previously existed, and, at this time, the emergence of new register distinctions (Smith 1996: 140). In some ways a category that describes a material state such as 'poverty' might be expected to remain relatively settled culturally even though the nature of poverty might change over time as economic conditions evolved. That the words used to describe it are subject to such change leads to various questions, particularly if, as Geeraerts suggests, language is a way of organising knowledge that reflects the needs, interests



and experiences of individuals and cultures (1997: 8). So some of these questions are concerned with the linguistic process but some are concerned with the relationship between the words and the concepts they express and the shape the concept takes in the minds of speakers.

## **Theoretical framework**

My focus is both onomasiological in that I am trying to identify the lexical items which express the concept ‘poverty’ in different texts and times, and also semasiological in that I am looking at the polysemy and range of senses that those words inhabit in addition to their senses concerning poverty. I consider these questions within a cognitive-linguistic framework in which the relationship between language and cognition is seen as central. Language structure and cognition are interdependent, and linguistic organisation is conditioned by our experience — of ourselves, the world around us and our experience of and relationship to that world. Our experience is affected by a range of factors which encompass, for example, our physical, social and cultural lives. Given this interdependence of language and cognition, the maintenance of clear boundaries in linguistic categories is no longer tenable. Not only do the boundaries of linguistic categories themselves become fuzzy and overlapping, but it becomes impossible to maintain a division between linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge (Rudzka-Ostyn 1993: 1-2). As Sweetser suggests, word meaning cannot be fully analysed into features as our understanding of meaning involves analysis of both the frames and the lexical senses that depend on them and the meaning and the frame are inseparable from one another (1990: 17).

Within each category there are members which need not exhibit all, or sometimes even most, of the category’s features. There are members which appear more central, or more typical, than others in that they show a higher number of features and these may be seen as core or prototypical members. There are also members, however,

whose prototypicality does not show a high number of typical features but shows closeness to an ideal attribute, for example in a category whose focus is ‘things to eat on a diet’ a member’s proximity to ‘no calories’ may make it a prototype (Barsalou 1992: 47).

An important aspect of this approach, particularly with reference to language change over time, is the concept of ‘frame’. The frame is not the meaning of a word, but is crucial to our understanding of it (Lee 2001: 8) and it consists of more than purely linguistic knowledge. For example the word *mother* can be defined in much the same terms for a Victorian as for a twenty-first century text, mothers have many common elements that are stable over time. However twenty-first century technological changes have led to additional elements in the frame that the word inhabits which would not be present for the Victorian. These may be expressed through collocation, for example *surrogate mother* who may or may not be the *biological mother* but who gives birth to the child. When this collocation is explicit in the text we can gain a sense of the meaning, even though we may be approaching the text with another perspective in the foreground. However, when this collocation is not present, or when the word is used without this sense being intended, the concept of a *surrogate mother* is still present for PDE language speakers in their frame of the word *mother*, even though it may not be in the foreground in that instance. In this case the knowledge the speaker has which concerns *surrogacy* in this sense is not intra-linguistic but is part of their extra-linguistic, or encyclopaedic, knowledge about the world they inhabit. The word *mother* has various attributes in its frame with, among others, biological, genetic and social elements. In this example the changes are technological, but changes may also occur through more subtle forces such as cultural and social shifts in which elements in a word’s meaning which were in a minor role, may move to the foreground or elements may enter which were not previously present, either not present for some time or not previously present at all.

A co-occurring set of attributes constitutes the core of the frame (Barsalou 1992:



30). Barsalou describes an attribute as a concept that describes an aspect of at least some of the category members, for example colour may describe some aspect of birds. It may be that in the 'poverty' category social status may describe some of the category members. Attributes have 'values' which contain information about the attribute which is not contained in it and is more specific, so in the 'poverty' category the attribute 'social status' may have the value of being 'low.' If it is possible to gain a sense of what the attributes and values are for the members of the 'poverty' category for the texts then that will be a glimpse into the nature of the frame that the word inhabits for the speakers, although of necessity a sketchy and imperfect glimpse.

George Lakoff's book *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things* (1987) has the subtitle *What Categories Reveal about the Mind*. My study is concerned with what a specific category, that of poverty, and its frames may reveal about the minds of the language users; with whether, and how, a particular category, its members, and their change over time, can be revealing about the nature of the concept in the minds of the language users. This is an enquiry into language choice and change and their relationship with social and cultural attitudes. The assumption is made that they are interdependent and influence each other and that the extralinguistic circumstances are an integral part of the changes in the lexis. The assumption is, following Smith (1996: 116), that vocabulary, here used of poverty and the poor, carries meaning that is made by context, words being defined by their relationship to other words, and that associative or connotative meanings which are to do with the associations a word carries are an important part of the meaning of that word. There is, therefore, feedback between the associations and the words which affect each other. These connotations are present in the mind of the author, readers and listeners but may be difficult to access by readers from a different time, culture or language and are a product of many things including social and cultural conditions.

There has been much discussion among linguists about 'unique beginners', items high enough in a hierarchy of lexical items that they are the ultimate hypernym and

cannot be further described. This seems to equate with Wierzbicka's ideas about 'semantic primitives' which lead her to assert that 'meanings can be rigorously described and compared if they are recognised for what they are: unique and culture-specific configurations of universal semantic primitives' (1992: 226). However, frame theorists such as Barsalou describe frames as being like fractals, built recursively, occurring at lower and lower levels reflecting the higher. He suggests that people are highly creative in their construction of attributes, creating new ones relevant to specific circumstances although he considers that the capacity of working memory might limit the number of core attributes in a frame to around five (1992: 44). He suggests that some attributes may be necessary conceptually, such that it is impossible to understand the concept without them, for example *buy* requires *buyer*, *seller*, *merchandise* and *payment*. In addition he describes *structural invariants* which are correlational relations between core attributes which reflect conceptual information as well and which generally hold across most exemplars of a concept, he gives the example of the *operates* relation between *driver* and *engine* in a car (1992: 35). It has been suggested that these relations are the 'primitives' but Chaffin finds, as with the recursive nature of frames, these relations also exhibit a typicality structure with some being more typical than others (1992: 285). One of the interesting elements in the examination of the concept 'poverty' and its category is whether what seems to be a core attribute such as 'material poverty' is a necessary concept or whether it too shows a recursive nature.

## **The nature of the evidence**

When all that is available is written language the question arises of how it is possible to access the connotations and the knowledge that might be present in the mind of a long dead language speaker. Clearly the spoken language is not accessible but some part of the written language is available and permits the examination of semantic



relationships such as collocation and antonymy. Polysemy in individual words can also be a window into the associations as the additional senses a word inhabits hover in the background when the word is used and, I suggest, may reveal cultural and social attitudes. Geeraerts suggests that, roughly speaking, polysemy is the synchronic reflection of diachronic semantic change (1997: 6) and many of the words that are members of the ‘poverty’ category seem to have accumulated polysemous characteristics along their path. This polysemy indicates contemporary issues and is a factor in diachronic semantic change as the cognitive structure that underlies polysemy patterns in lexical meaning also underlies historical patterns in meaning change (Sweetser 1990: 22).

Collocation can throw light onto the shades in meaning if, as Romaine suggests, ‘collocations transmit cultural meanings and stereotypes which have built up over time’ (2000: 109). My aim is to collect the category members from a text and to put them together to form the ‘poverty’ category for that text, or group of texts.<sup>5</sup> The method is to identify the vocabulary used about the poor or poverty in context, with dictionary materials as part of the criteria. The detailed identification is primarily made through contextual meaning and other criteria such as synonym, antonym and collocation. The method is discussed more fully below. The nature of the resulting categories, their changes over time, their relationship to the extralinguistic circumstances and how these inform each other are the subject of this study.

The use of a word as an antonym to another illuminates aspects of both. The antonymic relationship a word has with a word from another category which carries a core or central sense suggests that both words may be seen in similar relationships to their own categories.

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<sup>5</sup> Texts are considered as a group where they can be seen as connected in a language context, for example the AB texts, or are a mutually contemporary collection in a manuscript, for example the Trinity Homilies.



## Method

I have decided to assume 'material condition' is a core attribute with its value being 'materially poor'. For the majority of the lexical items that I identify as part of the 'poverty' category in my texts, their various dictionary definitions contain this sense. This is a value which is difficult to describe except in terms of itself. It falls into what Fillmore and Atkins describe as a 'when' definition (1992: 101). Such a definition here may be stated as "'materially poor' is when you have not got enough money or wealth to be able to support yourself." It might also be relative as well as subjective, so the definition could become "'materially poor' is when you do not have as much money or wealth as someone else who, you feel, is otherwise comparable to you". Fillmore and Atkins go on to say that these kind of definitions were traditionally rejected because they were not able to take the place of the defined word in its grammatical characteristics, but they argue that once we see the relevance of the frame notion for understanding the meanings of words the naturalness of the so-called 'when' definitions is apparent. My identification of the senses of the various lexical items in their context is close to these 'when' definitions.

In my discussion of the words I have not distinguished them by grammatical function, unlike traditional dictionaries. Like Fabiszak in her analysis of *joy*, *bliss*, *delight* and *blithe* I am persuaded by Langacker's statement that the semantic content of nouns and denominal verbs or deverbal nouns and their verbal counterparts are the same, the difference lies in the language user's profiling of the situation (Fabiszak 2000: 304).

My identification of items in the category can be seen as an informal type of componential analysis and is based on psychological salience which Kay identifies as an underpinning process in her discussion on the apparently untheorised activities of dictionary compilers and users (2000: 56-7). I identify contextual senses in context which are all intuitive, informal and text based. My category is composed of items that

are central and typical and have mutual semantic relations. The category is composed through these mutual semantic relations and not through necessary conditions. As Kay comments of core meanings in polysemous categories, I suggest that my prototypical core, 'material poverty', can be recognised as prototypical in this category in the same way that speakers recognise the prototypical cups or birds (Kay 2000: 59).

There are fuzzy edges surrounding the identification of the words that form part of this category. There are times in context where it is impossible to say whether a word carries the sense 'poverty' or whether the sense of a neighbouring field, such as more general 'misery' is sufficient. Sometimes in context both, or more than two, senses can be present and it is difficult to say which should be foregrounded. I suggest that there may be some ambiguity, with one sense in the foreground and one further back, rather than it being necessary to include one sense and exclude another. The neighbouring senses that bleed into the category of poverty are often those concerned with 'lack' and 'want' and, more generally and more difficult to distinguish clearly, 'misery', 'hardship', 'distress' and senses to do with low status. Kay and Samuels suggest that 'a probable interpretation of sense variation would be to view lexical items as a series of - as it were - 'rallying posts' for clusters of components which are selected and placed in order of prominence by the clusters of neighbouring items' (Kay and Samuels 1975: 79).

I study some texts closely as the necessary links to background frames are not present in dictionaries (Fillmore and Atkins 1992: 76). Although my decision about which sense is central is informal, some words are included because they form part of the *TOE* 'poverty' category, and some are captured through semantic relationship with items already identified.

This study provides information about the changing category, and about the category in individual texts or groups of texts, enabling them to be compared with each other and with the overall category. The primary focus is text based and practical rather than theoretical. It is accepted in my approach that changes in word meaning



are likely to be influenced by, and reflected in, changes in frames, in background assumptions as argued by Taylor (1999) and that in semantic change encyclopaedic information is potentially as important as semantic senses, if the two can be seen as distinct at all (Geeraerts 1999). I have therefore structured the study into sections based on texts, or groups of texts, and the discussion of each text is then divided into two sections. The first is broadly semasiological in that I identify and consider the lexemes which express the concept 'poverty' although I include some exploration of polysemy. The method by which I identify the items is outlined below. The second section is largely onomasiological in that I examine the lexemes from the first section in context and group them into the contextual senses they carry in the text; this may include some senses which are on the periphery of the category, or even which appear to be outside it. My aim in including polysemous senses which may not appear to express 'poverty' is to explore the fuzzy edges of the category and the frames of individual members of the category.

It is sometimes striking how items share similar polysemous senses with each other, or with items that were in the category at earlier times but which are no longer present, or which have shifted their sense considerably. While these peripheral senses may be hard to include as part of the concept or category 'poverty', their presence in the meanings of individual items illuminates the concepts that surround the category, the frames which individual words inhabit. Some of these senses may not be included in the PDE definitions for a thesaurus category of poverty, such as the sense *wrecche* carries of 'an evil person'. It is interesting that this dimension of 'evil' is also present in the Czech 'poverty' vocabulary (Buck 1949). The definition of the category is a core issue, and I hope that the intertwined and changing shape of the category and the concept will throw light upon the nature of each other, and on what their prototypical cores might be.

## **Identification of the category members**

### **The definition of the category**

To begin I have taken as a given the words in the category as it exists in the *TOE*. I have done this because the changes made over time to this Old English category are part of my focus. I have, however, added words to those in the *TOE* category through the contextual meanings in the eME texts I have studied. Because of the fuzziness on the boundaries of the category, in particular between this category and that of ‘lack’ and ‘want’ and the very subtle area of ‘misery’, ‘hardship’ and ‘distress’ it may not be clear from the context whether a word contains the component of poverty. To some extent this is a circular problem in that in order to map the category, words have to be chosen which contain a component of poverty and yet the shape of the category and its boundaries is affected by the words chosen and cannot be seen as a whole until the words are assembled.

To begin I have concentrated on the sense ‘material poverty’ as my prototypical sense and have moved out from there in the expectation that there will be radial connections between words with family resemblances. This central sense ‘material poverty’ can sometimes be comparatively simple to identify in context and the net that I hope to create with my range of criteria for additional word choice should catch words and instances which cluster around this literal sense. The family resemblance connections however will mean that I identify some words which do not appear to be firmly within the category; some of these add components to the frame.

### **The criteria for word choice**

There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study. The categories produced for individual texts or groups of texts are not exactly the same. There may be differences through the effects of genre, dialect, time or scribal choice but it is possible to make comparisons between the different categories obtained.



1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time. This will enable the items to be tracked across eME texts. For example, although *þearf* appears to exist in AB texts, and other eME texts, purely in its OE verb form of ‘to need to’, there are some eME texts in which it still carries the sense ‘poverty’.<sup>6</sup>

2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context, for example *westi* in a rare instance and, more frequently, *wrecche* which is not in the *TOE* poverty category but carries the component of poverty in subsequent use. It is interesting that although *wrecche* is not a central item in the AB texts, it is central in other early Middle English texts in the word field of poverty.<sup>7</sup> This is established through work on other eME texts and through dictionaries with citations from the eME period.

3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied because this means that they are part of the texts’ contemporary ‘poverty’ vocabulary.

4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches which I take to be an antonymic category.

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<sup>6</sup> For example Bodley 343 second half of the 12th century, BL Stowe 34 *Vices and Virtues* first quarter of 13th century (so possibly contemporary with the AB texts).

<sup>7</sup> Widely used, for example as early as *The Peterborough Chronicle*, Bodley 343, the *Trinity* and *Lambeth Homilies* and later in Jesus 29 in the last quarter of the 13th century.



5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense ‘poverty’ such as Latin *pauper*.

6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

These criteria sometimes lead to the inclusion of words that are on the periphery of the poverty category and whose appearance in the poverty category may be at some distance from the prototypical sense of the word, for example, in the AB texts the items *eðelich*, *lah* or *wac*. Their connection to the category in this case is a function of prototype theory which accepts that the edges of the category may be blurred, and the connection between members may show a family resemblance structure with a cluster of more central items (Lakoff 1987, Geeraerts 1997 et al.). These items highlight the blurred edges of the category. I identify the more central and the more peripheral items and map the connections between them to gain a sense of the nature of the category. My additional aim in including words that may be peripheral is to include their polysemy as part of the wider context of the category so that the nature of the polysemy brought by association with different words may be highlighted to illuminate the connotations the category includes in context. These frames include factors that are not solely linguistic.

## **Other factors**

There are other factors in word choice than semantic ones, although clearly choices are made within semantic constraints.

## Style

Sometimes stylistic considerations affect word choice where alliteration or assonance, for example, may be a factor. The choice of the alliterating pair *wone* and *westi* in *Wohunge*, and, in other eME texts, of *riche* and *wrecche* may be illustrations of this. It is possible that the use of a word for stylistic reasons may influence its shift into a closely associated, or opposing, category particularly in a context in which word pairs, formed from either synonyms or antonyms, are an important stylistic device as they are in early Middle English in general and the AB texts in particular. In the case of *westi* were it not for its one instance in *Wohunge* where it is a synonym for *wrecche* and both words amplify *poure* it would not be included at all, as none of its other extant instances are connected with material poverty even with the wide criteria I have set. It is important to include such words and their other senses as, while a factor in their choice may have been stylistic such as alliteration or assonance, their extension into this category and the senses they bring with them help to map the shape of the category in the mental lexicon of the writer.<sup>8</sup> This is an example of the phenomenon which in a reoccurrence is named by Geeraerts ‘semantic polygenesis’ in which a word is used more than once, but separated in time, in a sense which is extremely peripheral and marginal and disappears as quickly as it occurred. He sees this as one of the characteristics of semasiological change (1997: 62). However this use of *westi* could be called simply ‘semantic genesis’ as it does not survive as recorded in this marginal sense at any other time.

## Cultural and religious

The poverty content in these eME religious texts is complex, sometimes involving material poverty but the context of the contemporary Christian preoccupation with issues concerning worldly, or involuntary, poverty as opposed to spiritual, or

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<sup>8</sup> By ‘writer’ I mean the person who makes the word choice; it may be either the author or subsequent scribes.



voluntary, poverty, where 'poor' can contain both positive and negative elements is an important factor. There is an increase in the preoccupation with Christ's poverty on earth and its implications for Christians through voluntary religious poverty during the tenth and eleventh centuries, which means that poverty is a large element in the content of eME religious texts. Moore suggests that the spiritual ideal which drove the great religious reforms of the eleventh century was that of *paupertas*, not poverty as we conventionally translate it, but 'powerlessness' (1998: 103). In this context the sense in which the lexical terms for poverty are being used in eME religious texts may not coincide with PDE use, even when the words *poure* or *pouerte* are used and are commonly glossed in PDE as 'poor' or 'poverty' and I explore this in the corpus. At the same time the involuntary poor are also present in the texts and I hope to gain a sense of the nature of attitudes to them and their condition. This involves the examination of textual evidence and of secondary literature which may not be primarily linguistic in focus, to include these factors which Samuels, among others, calls extralinguistic but which is also known as 'encyclopedic knowledge'. I have tried to separate the linguistic from the contextual analysis as far as possible for this study but this is often difficult, which is not surprising if in cognitive-linguistic research it can be impossible to separate linguistic from extra-linguistic knowledge (Rudzka-Ostyn 1993: 2 and for a discussion on the complex relationships between lexical and encyclopaedic knowledge see Allan 1992: 355-373).

## Problems

A fundamental issue is that of the nature of the concept 'poverty' and how this changes through the period and from text to text. In some ways it is a chicken and egg problem in that the nature of the concept exists through the words used to express it, but inevitably the words used to express it are identified by modern readers within contemporary frames, the contemporary framework of assumptions about, and

contexts of, the nature of the concept. One of the features of the changes from the Anglo Saxon period to the early Middle English Period is that economic changes in the increasing use of cash transactions and a move towards urbanisation affected the referent and concept of involuntary poverty, while complications were added as voluntary poverty became an increasingly central preoccupation in the Christian church, and then in the political life of the time, through the mendicant movements and their appeal to the people. These issues appear in the texts to a greater or lesser extent depending on their content, and the separate, text-based, vocabularies reflect content as well as change across dialects and through time. It is my assumption that, even where a text does not contain subject matter directly related to these changes, the vocabulary and frames that the author has to draw on, and the author's concept of poverty, will have been affected by them.

As with all diachronic research into language and meaning it is impossible to recreate fully the impact of words upon their contemporary audience. As has often been observed, one of the difficulties in diachronic semantics is that it is not possible to question the language users so the shape the concept takes in their minds is lost to us. However, as Geeraerts says synonym dictionaries can show the intuitive judgements of speakers in identifying core meanings and I have broadened this into a focus on collocation and antonym as well as contextual senses (1997: 171 ff). By including the polysemous meanings of the words in the category I offer a sense of the range of concepts that were associated with the poverty category in the language of the time but with the caveat that the only evidence is the written evidence that survives. It is impossible to ascertain whether the surviving material is a balanced representation of contemporary word associations. The majority of texts that have survived are religious and the results reflect this bias.



## **Problems concerning the nature of the data**

There are problems once the data is collected which make it unwise to be dogmatic about the results. It is impossible to know how far surviving texts are representative of the texts of their time. This applies to both the pre and post Conquest material but is probably more acute for writing in OE after the Conquest. Bately warns that the smallness of the number of Old English texts that have survived make it difficult to assess the significance of distribution patterns of either apparently rare or apparently common words (1985: 51). Similarly when considering texts from the early Middle English period, there are many factors which make it wise to hedge any judgements. There is a relative scarcity of texts from the century and a half following the Norman Conquest written in English. Those that have survived are difficult to date in any way that enables a diachronic analysis of the language to be confidently made, and this is further complicated by the issue of dialect through the proliferation of local variations in written English following the Conquest.

There are issues about the validity of comparisons between manuscripts when some appear to be written as original compositions post Conquest, and others appear to consist in part or in whole of texts originally written in Old English and recopied, and possibly therefore updated, in the period after the Conquest. There may also be the complication of why the decision was made to write in English post Conquest or of the conscious archaisms which formulæ may represent (Smith citing Mitchell and Dancev 1996: 155). In addition to this is the issue of textual type and its influence on the scribal choices. In a verse form lexical modification is a much more complex issue than in prose. If the exemplar is of a more recent or an older text, this may influence how free the scribe is able to be with lexical choice. Lexical choice may be more constrained in a religious than in a secular text. Indeed, when an examination is made of the twelfth century versions of the gospels, it seems that lexical replacement is present but is not common (Liuzza 2000: 196-202).



In the world of the handwritten copying of texts, the relationship between the textual content and its physical expression, through orthography and lexical choice, is complex. Even where it is possible to follow the textual transmission of work by a known author, such as Ælfric, there is seldom a way of identifying a fixed 'authoritative' original, as Ælfric himself adapted his two series of *Catholic Homilies* for reissue. This is compounded by the overlying complexity of later adaptation, textual transmission and recopying by different scribes (Swan 2000: 64; Clemoes 1997: 64 ff. for a full discussion; Godden 1979: xx-xciv).

McIntosh emphasised the importance of the individual scribes and their manuscripts, so that while there may be several copies of a particular text scribal practice such as translating the text into their own dialect is more important in locating the geography of the words than the content ([1973] 1989: 92). This factor may be less important with early rather than later Middle English texts as it appears that the majority of early Middle English scribes tend to be more consistent copiers (Laing 2000: 100). From the point of view of tracing lexical change, however, this is important as the behaviour of the individual scribe is a factor not just from manuscript to manuscript but within manuscripts where there are changes of hand and while the text cannot be taken as representative of local spoken language the influence of the dialect of the scribe, as well as previous scribes, is a factor. Sometimes, however, any lexical replacement in a text could be the result of a variety of factors. In her discussion of *Poema Morale* Hill traces some one word substitutions and variants which may be based on a variety of circumstance, such as prior readings, mis-division of words, misreading of the exemplar or revisions (1976: 104-106).

## **2. The *TOE* category**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I shall examine the items in the *TOE* category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** to establish the nature of the items in the category. I shall look at the relationships between the items both in the poverty category and in addition at any relationships between them in categories outside the poverty category in which they also appear.

The category **15.01.06** is to be found in category **15 Property**, which is arranged as:

#### **15 Property, possessions, wealth**

##### **15.01 Property**

##### **15.02 Worth, value**

##### **15.03 Exaction of tax / tribute**

##### **15.04 A debt, due**

##### **15.05 Trade, traffic, commerce**

**15.01** contains the headings:

##### **15.01 Property**

##### **15.01.01 Landed property**

##### **15.01.01.01 Holding of land**

##### **15.01.01.01.01 Hiring, letting out of property / land**

##### **15.01.02 Gift, transfer of property**

##### **15.02.01 Inherited property**

##### **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth**

**15.01.04 Coinage, money**

**15.01.05 Possession of wealth**

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence**

**15.01.06** contains two sections:

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence**

**15.01.06.01 Begging**

**15.01.06.01 Begging** contains seven words, four begin *wædl-*, and the remaining three are the verbs *bedecian*, *giernan* and *ābedecian*.

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence**

The system of dots represent degrees of internal subordination (*TOE: xxxiii*).

The flags indicate whether the word is:

**o** - found once only in Old English

**p** - found only in Old English poetry

**g** - probably restricted to glossed texts and glossaries

**q** - a word whose putative existence is gravely to be doubted

of which there is a full discussion in the *TOE* (pp. *xxii* - *xxxi*). All the flags are represented in the group under discussion.

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence:** *fēasceaftnes<sup>g</sup>*, *hafenlēast*, *hīenþ(o)*, *iermþ*, *næft*,

*þearfednes*, *þearflicnes*, *unspēd<sup>g</sup>*, *wādelnes*, *wādl*, *wādlung*, *wanāht<sup>op</sup>*,

*wanhaf(e)nes<sup>g</sup>*, *wanhafolnes<sup>g</sup>*, *wanspēd*, *wanspēdignes<sup>og</sup>*, *wēaþearf<sup>o</sup>* *wēþelnes<sup>g</sup>*

**.Want of money:** *feohlēasnes<sup>q</sup>*, *nearones*

**.Great need, penury:** *eodorgong<sup>op</sup>*, *oferþearf*



.A poor person: nīedwǣdla<sup>op</sup>, þearfa, þearf(ig)end, unāga<sup>op</sup>, unmaga, wǣdla, wǣdling, wanhafa, weorþþearfa<sup>o</sup>, woruldþearfa<sup>op</sup>

..Person in great need: oferþearfa

..Beggar, person supported by alms: ælmesmann, loddere, tætteca

.Poor, needy, indigent: beþearfende, beþearfod, earm, fēalōg<sup>op</sup>, fēasceaft<sup>p</sup>, fēasceaftig<sup>op</sup>, hēan, medspēdig<sup>op</sup>, næftig<sup>g</sup>, þearfende, þearfendlic, þearflic, unrīce, wǣdla, wǣdlig, wǣdligend, wanhafol, wanspēdig, woruldþearfende<sup>op</sup>,

..Poor, without means: feohlēas, hafenlēas, hēanspēdig<sup>op</sup>, unspēdig

..Depending on alms: ælmeslic

..Lacking clothing, poor, needy: nacod

.Miserably: þearfendlīce

.To be poor, be in want: nīed habban, þearfan, þurfan, wǣdlian

.To make poor, pauperize: geierman

## The information presented in the *TOE*

### The Flags

There are 67 words (I am treating *nīed habban*, as a single unit) contained in **15.01.06**.

The flags occur on the following words, the same word may be in two columns because it carries both flags:

subcategory	flag	flag	flag	flag
	<b>o</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>g</b>	<b>q</b>
Poverty, indigence - ten not flagged/eight flagged:				
	-	-	fēasceaftnes	-
	-	-	unspēd	-
	wanǣht	wanǣht	-	-

-	-	wanhaf(e)nes	-
-	-	wanhafolnes	-
wanspēdignes	-	wanspēdignes	-
wēaþearf	wēaþearf	-	-
-	-	wēþelnes	-

**.Want of money - one not flagged/one flagged:**

-	-	-	feohlēasnes
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**.Great need, penury - one not flagged/one flagged:**

eodorgong	eodorgong	-	-
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**.A poor person - six not flagged/four flagged:**

nīedwædla	nīedwædla	-	-
unāga	unāga	-	-
weorþþearfa		-	-
woruldþearfa	woruldþearfa	-	-

**..Person in great need - one not flagged/none flagged:**

-	-	-	-
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**..Beggar, person supported by alms - three not flagged/none flagged:**

-	-	-	-
---	---	---	---

**.Poor, needy, indigent - thirteen not flagged/six flagged:**

fēalōg	fēalōg	-	-
-		fēasceaft	-
fēasceaftig	fēasceaftig	-	
medspēdig	medspēdig	-	-
-	-		næftig
woruldþearfende	woruldþearfende		-

**..Poor, without means - three not flagged/one flagged:**

hēanspēdig    hēanspēdig    -    -

**..Depending on alms - one not flagged/none flagged:**

-    -    -    -

**..Lacking clothing, poor, needy - one not flagged/none flagged:**

-    -    -    -

**.Miserably - one not flagged/none flagged**

-    -    -    -

**.To be poor, be in want - four not flagged/none flagged:**

-    -    -    -

**.To make poor, pauperize - one not flagged/none flagged:**

-    -    -    -

I will not discuss the only word flagged **q**, *feohleasnes*, which occurs in **15.01 06**. **.Want of money.** The sole citations for this word in the entry in J. Bosworth and T. N. Toller, ed., *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* consist of entries in dictionaries by Somner (1659), Benson (1701) and Lye (1772) and in view of its status I shall not include it in further analysis, although it is worth noting that *feohleas* appears, unflagged, in this group, under **..Poor, without means**. I shall also restrict comments on the words flagged **g** as a group, in the light of the observations in the *TOE* (xxix - xxx) concerning the difficulties involved in counting **g** forms as well as the need for greater differentiation among glossed texts. It is interesting, however, that 5 of the 6 words flagged **g** occur in the head category **Poverty, indigence**. Of all 6 words, only *wanspēdignes* is flagged as appearing only once.

### **The distribution of the flagged words among the subcategories**

The most striking feature of the distribution of all the flagged words in this category is



their absence in any of the subcategories containing adverbs and verbs and the question is whether this is unusual either for the *TOE* as a whole or for the other groups in **15**. In the *TOE* (xxv-xxvi) examples are given of groups which are heavily studded with **p** and **op** flags and one of these is **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth**. This is interesting for a comparison with **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** as it is close to it in the overall categorization. although on the other hand it may be likely to be more heavily drawn on for words in poetry because of the nature of its referents.

Unfortunately **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** does not contain any adverbs or verbs, so no direct comparison can be made. In category **15 Property** as a whole there are some verbs and adverbs that are flagged, but they seem to be **o** and **g** flags. My impression is, however, that much of the vocabulary in **15** as a whole is of a practical rather than a poetic nature. Among other parts of speech there are some **p** flags, notably in the subcategories **15.01.02.01 Inherited property**, where there are no verbs or adverbs flagged; **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth**, which has no verbs or adverbs; **15.01.05 Possession of wealth** which has one verb and one adverb flagged **og**.

Some other sections are identified as particularly rich in **p** and **op** flagged words (*TOE*: xxvi-ii). Of these I looked at **08.01.01.03 Good feeling, joy, happiness**, which has flagged words in every section bar two which contain one word each, *gefeā* and *oferblipe*. The section containing adverbs holds nine items, of which only one is flagged, *unmurnlice<sup>p</sup>*, and that is light for this subcategory. I also looked at **08.01.03 Bad feeling, sadness** in which five groups contain no flags. One of these groups contains only *sinsorgna gedræg* and the remaining four are those containing adverbs and verbs.

While this is much too small a survey on which to base conclusions, it is possible that the absence of flags in the groups containing verbs and adverbs in **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** could reflect a general tendency rather than being a particular feature of this subcategory.

Two adjectival subcategories in **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** ..**Depending on alms** and **..Lacking clothing, poor, needy** have no flags but contain only one item each. There are three other sections which contain no flagged words: **.Want of money:** (feohleasnes<sup>9</sup> which is not included in the analysis), nearones; **..Person in great need:** oferþearfa; **..Beggar, person supported by alms:** ælmesmann, loddere, tætteca.

### Words flagged p or op

### Comparison of the ratio of unflagged to flagged items in 15. Property

Category **15 Property**: total number of items/number flagged p or op

**15.01 Property** - 45/6

**15.01.01 Landed property** - 54/2

**15.01.01.01 Holding of land** - 43/1

**15.01.01.01.01 Hiring, letting out of property/land** - 15/0

**15.01.02 Gift, transfer of property** - 33/0

**15.01.02.01 Inherited property** - 50/8

**15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** - 87/44

**15.01.04 Coinage, money** - 67/0

**15.01.05 Possession of wealth** - 36/5

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** - 66/12

**15.01.06.01 Begging** - 7/0

Items including alternatives eg. *tīpa beon/weorþan* are counted as one item and phrases are counted as one item.

**15 Property** contains eleven subcategories, ranging in size from the smallest, **15.01.06.01 Begging**, with seven items, none flagged p or op, to the largest, **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** with 87 items, containing 44 p or op flagged items, the



highest proportion in **15 Property**, and a subcategory particularly dense with **p** flags for the *TOE* as a whole (*TOE*: xxvi).

As a whole, category **15 Property** contains four subcategories with no words flagged **p** or **op** at all. Some of these are large subcategories, such as **15.01.04 Coinage, money** with 67 items and **15.01.02 Gift, transfer of property** with thirty three items. **15.01.01.01 Holding of land** has one flagged item out of forty three and **15.01.01 Landed property** has only two flagged items out of fifty four. However these contain practical or legal vocabulary with little emotional content and are unlikely to contain much poetic content. It is interesting that **15.01.06.01 Begging** has no flagged items, although it is the smallest subcategory with only seven items in total.

The highest proportion of **p** or **op** flagged items is in **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth**, which is one of the most flagged categories in the *TOE* and has almost half of its items flagged **p** or **op** with eighty seven items of which forty four are flagged. The next highest proportion is **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** - with just over a fifth of the items flagged **p** or **op** with sixty six items of which twelve are flagged. The subcategories in **15 Property** with the next highest proportions of poetic items are **15.01 Property** with 45 items of which six are flagged **p** or **op**; **15.01.02.01 Inherited property** with 50 items of which 8 are flagged **p** or **op**; **15.01.05 Possession of wealth** with 36 items of which 5 are flagged **p** or **op**; **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** with 66 items of which twelve are flagged **p** or **op**.

#### **Flags in 15.01.06 Poverty, indigence**

Within **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** there is one word flagged **p** which is **.Poor, needy, indigent: fēasceaft<sup>p</sup>**. There are eleven words are flagged **op** -

**Poverty, indigence: wanæht, wēapearf**

**.Great need, penury: eodorgong**



**.A poor person:** nīedwǣdla, unāga, woruldþearfa

**.Poor, needy, indigent:** fēalōg, fēasceaftig, medspēdig, woruldþearfende

**..Poor, without means:** hēanspedig

This seems a high proportion of poetic words to be found only once, eleven out of twelve, and in comparison **15.01.02.01 Inherited property** shows two of the eight poetic words used once; **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** shows twenty nine of the forty four poetic words used once, while **15.01.05 Possession of wealth** shows four of the five poetic words used once.

However, in considering aspects such as the poetic or rare nature of the words in such a subcategory, it is important to keep in mind both the very small size of the sample, and Bately's warning that the smallness of the number of Old English texts that have come down to us makes it difficult to assess the impact on an Anglo-Saxon audience, not only of these seemingly rare words, but also of a number of more common ones. We must indeed treat with caution distribution patterns that seem to indicate that certain words were poetic, or early, or late, or dialectal, or even an indicator of authorship. (Bately 1985: 51)

## Summary

None of the adverbs or verbs are flagged, which could be a general tendency across the categories rather than a feature of this category in particular.

The total of words flagged **p** or **op** is twelve which is just over one fifth of the total number of items. This is a higher proportion than other categories nearby which are often more concrete in nature, such as **15.01.02 Gift, transfer of property** which has a total of thirty three items of which none are flagged **p**. On the other hand, also nearby is the category which has one of the highest incidences of **p** flags, **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** in which there is a total of eighty seven items of which forty

four are flagged **p** or **op**. It seems likely that the nature of the content is an important factor here as treasure and riches probably occur more often in poetry than poverty, but it is striking that **Treasure, riches, wealth** is an almost antonymic category.

Of the twelve words flagged as found in poetic use, eleven are also flagged as found once only. This is a high proportion, compared to **15.01.03 Treasure, riches, wealth** where, of the forty four words flagged **p** twenty nine are also flagged as found once only, which is just over half.

## Individual Items

Many of the items can be grouped. These are:

### Connected to **þearf**

There are seventeen items:

*þearfednes þearflicnes wēaþearf<sup>op</sup> oferþearf þearfa*  
*þearf(ig)end weorþþearfa<sup>o</sup> woruldþearfa<sup>op</sup> oferþearfa beþearfende beþearfod*  
*þearfende þearfendlic þearflic woruldþearfende<sup>op</sup> þearfendlice*  
*þearfan*

The **p** or **op** flagged words in this group are the compounds - *wēaþearf<sup>op</sup>* - *weorþþearfa<sup>o</sup>* - *woruldþearfa<sup>op</sup>* - *woruldþearfende<sup>op</sup>*.<sup>9</sup>

The addition *be-* in *beþearfende* and *beþearfod* is a prefix which could act with an intransitive verb to make it transitive or privative or does not alter the sense according to Clark Hall, and *ofer* is an intensifier as in *oferbliðe* - 'too light hearted', *oferceald* - 'excessively cold', (Clark Hall 1960).

One word is in an internally subordinate category: **A poor person ..Person in great need: oferþearfa**

**purfan:**

purfan

### **Connected to wædl-**

There are fourteen items, *wædlung* appears twice and *wædla* four times, plus once in *niedwædla*, and *wædlian* appears twice

<i>wædelnes</i>	<i>wædl</i>	<i>wædlung</i>	<i>niedwædla<sup>op</sup></i>	<i>wædla</i>	<i>wædling</i>
<i>wædla</i>	<i>wædlig</i>	<i>wædligend</i>	<i>wædlian</i>	<i>wædlung</i>	<i>wædla</i>
<i>wædla</i>	<i>wædlian</i>				

The **op** flagged word in this group is the only compound - *niedwædla*

None of the words are in internally subordinate categories.

### **Containing sped-**

There are seven items:

<i>unspēd<sup>s</sup></i>	<i>wanspēd</i>	<i>wanspēdignes<sup>os</sup></i>	<i>medspēdig<sup>op</sup></i>	<i>wanspēdig</i>
<i>hēanspēdig<sup>op</sup></i>	<i>unspēdig</i>			

The **op** flagged words in this group are compounds: *medspēdig<sup>op</sup>* and *hēanspēdig<sup>op</sup>*

Two words are in an internally subordinate category to **.Poor, needy, indigent** -

**..Poor, without means:** *hēanspēdig<sup>op</sup>* and *unspēdig*, *un-* is a negative prefix and *wan-* can express privation or negation (Clark Hall 1960) however there is a fuller discussion of *wan-* below.

### **Containing hafēn/hafol**

There are six items:

<i>hafēnlēast</i>	<i>wanhaf(e)nes<sup>s</sup></i>	<i>wanhafolnes<sup>s</sup></i>	<i>wanhafa</i>	<i>wanhafol</i>	<i>hafēnlēas</i>
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There are no words flagged **p** or **op** in this group. One word is in an internally



subordinate category to **.Poor, needy, indigent - ..Poor, without means; hafenlēas**.

It is interesting to compare the lack of flagging in this group with the use of *hafenleast* in ref. 218 of the *Twelve Abuses* where it is used to differentiate between involuntary and voluntary poverty.

### **Containing fēasceaft**

There are three items:

*fēasceaftnes<sup>g</sup> fēasceaft<sup>p</sup> fēasceaftig<sup>op</sup>*

All the words in this small group are flagged, *fēasceaft* is the only word in the category flagged with just **p**, and *fēasceaftig* is flagged **op**. None of the words are in an internally subordinate category.

### **næft/næftig**

There are two items:

*næft næftig<sup>g</sup>*

Neither of the words are flagged **o** or **op**. Neither of the words are in an internally subordinate category

### **feohlēasnes/feohlēas**

There are two items:

*feohlēasnes<sup>a</sup> feohlēas*

Neither of the words is flagged **p** or **op** and *feohlēasnes<sup>a</sup>* is of doubtful status.

One word is in an internally subordinate category to **.Poor, needy, indigent - ..Poor, without means: feohleas**

## Containing *ælmes*

There are two items:

*ælmesmann ælmeslic*

Neither of the words are flagged. Both are in internally subordinate categories and may have a more specific meaning than the other words. Subordinate to **.A poor person** is **..Person supported by alms:** *ælmesmann*, and subordinate to **.Poor, needy, indigent** is **..Depending on alms:** *ælmeslic*. However some words, such as *earm* and *þearf* are used in laws and charters as though they have specific reference to the poor and needy requiring 'official' relief according to their entries in the Bosworth Toller *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*.

## The remaining items seem to be singletons

There are sixteen items

*hīenþ(o) iermþ wanæht<sup>op</sup> nearones eodorgong<sup>op</sup> unāga<sup>op</sup> unmaga  
loddere*

*tætteca earm fēalōg<sup>op</sup> hēan unrīce nacod nīed habban  
geierman*

Words flagged **op** are: *wanæht<sup>op</sup>*, *eodorgong<sup>op</sup>*, *unāga<sup>op</sup>* and *fēalōg<sup>op</sup>*

Three words are in internally subordinate categories: to **.A poor person - ..Beggar, person supported by alms:** *loddere*, *tætteca*, and to **.Poor, needy, indigent - ..Lacking clothing, poor, needy:** *nacod*

Within this word group there seem to be two main strands, which are the words connected to *þearfa*, and those connected to *wædla*. They comprise thirty one of the total of 73 words. None of them appear in internally subordinate categories, apart from *oferþearfa* which I suggest may be seen as an intensified form of *þearfa* in the sense of 'more of the same' rather than a compound in which an additional component

is added, such as in *woruldþearfa*<sup>op</sup>.

## Summary

There are sixty seven items in the category, of which seventeen are formed on *þearf*- and fourteen are formed on *wædl*-. These seem to be the items which are at the prototypical centre of this category as they appear in the head category, **Poverty, indigence**, in the noun forms under **.A poor person**, in the adjectival group **.Poor, needy, indigent** and in the verb group **.To be poor, be in want**. There is one adverbial item in the category as a whole which is *þearfendlice* in **.Miserably**. There are seven items formed with *spēd*- as a component and they are all negative formations. There are sixteen words which appear once only in any form.

## Additional categories

### The relationships of the items in 15.01.06 with their additional *TOE* categories

As the *TOE* collects together word meanings which are arranged conceptually, the index provides access to information about other meanings of the words and the other concept areas they inhabit, enabling a map to be put together of the varying additional categories that items in the poverty category also inhabit. These may be closely bordering or overlapping concepts. They sometimes are concepts which seem some distance from the poverty area and reflect the polysemy of some of the items. This highlights words and concepts which may provide sizeable parts of a particular category, but play only a minimal part in other areas, and vice versa. I shall keep the words in the grouping they formed in the previous section.

### Words connected to *þearfednes*

#### Contained in 15.01.06 only

*þearfednes* - *þearflicnes* - *wēaþearf*<sup>op</sup> - *oferþearf* - *weorþþearfa*<sup>o</sup> - *woruldþearfa*<sup>op</sup> -



*oferþearfa - beþearfende - beþearfod - þearfende - woruldþearfende<sup>op</sup> - þearfan*

**Contained in additional categories**

*þearfa*            **06.02.04.01.01. Need, distress, straits, difficulty**

*þearf(ig)end*   **08.01.03.06 Adversity**

*þearfendlic*    **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want**

*þearflic*        **06.02.04 Necessity, inevitability**

*þearfendlice*   **08.01.03.06.01 Affliction, misfortune, calamity**

*þurfan*

**Contained in additional categories**

**05.04 Fate, lot, fortune, destiny**

**06.02.04 Necessity, inevitability**

**06.02.04.01 Want, need**

**15.04 A debt, due**

**Words connected to *wædl-***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*wædelnes - wædlung(2x) - nīedwædla<sup>op</sup> - wædling - wædlig - wædligend*

**Contained in additional categories**

*wædl*            **02.01.03.02 Barrenness, sterility**

*wædla*        **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want**

*wædlian*      **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want**

**Words containing *spēd***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*unspēd* - *wanspēd* - *wanspēdignes*<sup>o<sup>g</sup></sup> - *medspēdig* - *wanspēdig* - *hēanspēdig*<sup>o<sup>p</sup></sup>

**Contained in additional categories**

*unspēdig*      **02.01.03.02 Barrenness, sterility**

**Words containing *hafen/hafol***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*hafenlēast* - *wanhaf(e)nes*<sup>g</sup> - *wanhafolnes*<sup>g</sup> - *wanhafa* - *wanhafol* - *hafenlēas*

**Contained in additional categories**

None

**Words containing *fēasceaft***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*fēasceaftnes*<sup>g</sup> - *fēasceaft*<sup>p</sup> - *fēasceaftig*<sup>o<sup>p</sup></sup>

**Contained in additional categories**

None

***Næft/næftig***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*næft* - *næftig*<sup>g</sup>

**Contained in additional categories**

None

*feohleasnes/feohleas*

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*feohlēasnes<sup>s</sup>*

**Contained in additional categories**

*feohlēas*      **14.03.03.09.02 Atonement**

**Words containing *ælmes***

**Contained in 15.01.06 only**

*ælmesmann*

**Contained in additional categories**

*ælmeslic*      **16.02.04.09 Almsgiving, charitableness**

**Singleton words**

**Contained in 15.06.01 only**

*wanæht<sup>op</sup> -eodorgong<sup>op</sup> -unāga<sup>op</sup> -loddere - tætteca - fēalōg<sup>op</sup> - geierman*

**Contained in additional categories**

*hīenþ(o)*      **02.02.04.04.03 Putting to death**

**02.08.04 Hurt, injury, damage**

**07.09 Shame, disgrace**

*iermþ*      **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction**

**12.08.06 Moral evil, depravity**



<i>nearones</i>	<b>02.08.03 Pain, bodily discomfort</b>
	<b>05.10.02 Narrowness, scantiness of space</b>
	<b>08.01.03.03 Anxiety</b>
	<b>11.11.01 A physical difficulty, strait</b>
<i>unmaga</i>	<b>12.01.01.07 A follower</b>
<i>earm</i>	<b>01.01.02.01.01.03.02 Inlet in a river/sea</b>
	<b>02.04.03.04.01 Arm</b>
	<b>02.06.01.04 Leg</b>
	<b>08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction</b>
	<b>10.02 Want, lack</b>
	<b>16.02.05.11 The Cross (as Christian symbol)</b>
<i>hēan</i>	<b>07.09.02 Disgrace, shaming, humiliation</b>
	<b>07.09.03 Infamy, ignominy, shame</b>
	<b>08.01.03.01 Despondency</b>
	<b>08.01.03.06.01 Affliction, misfortune, calamity</b>
	<b>11.03.02 Advancement, progress</b>
	<b>11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity</b>
	<b>12.01.01.11 The common people</b>
<i>unrīce</i>	<b>16.02.04 Worship, honour, praise</b>
	<b>12.01.01.11 The common people</b>

*nacod*      **04.02.05.06.05.03.04 Saddle**  
**04.04.07.02.01 Nakedness**  
**05.10.05.04.13 A removal of that which obscures or conceals**  
**09.03.04.03 Plain, simple**  
**11.08.03 Needless, useless, unprofitable**  
**13.02.08.04.03.02 Armed with a sword**

*nīed habban*    **06.02.04 Necessity, inevitability**  
**06.02.04.01 Want, need**

To reduce some of the complexity I shall not include all the word meanings which are so far removed from the concepts of poverty that the words seem to be homonyms, or where the metaphoric extension has produced a literal sense which is not connected with people. The meanings I shall remove are:

<i>earm</i> -	Inlet in river/sea	<b>01.01.02.01.01.03</b>
	Arm	<b>02.04.03.04.01</b>
	Leg	<b>02.06.01.04</b>
	The Cross as a Christian image	<b>16.02.05.11</b>
<i>nacod</i> -	Saddle	<b>04.02.05.06.05.03.04</b>
	Armed with a sword	<b>13.02.08.04.03.02</b>
<i>hienp(o)-</i>	Putting to death	<b>02.02.04.04.03</b>

**Words that appear in additional categories**

The words that appear in additional categories to **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** have been listed, and put into the following chart, so that it is possible to see which of the other 16 main categories in the *TOE* are represented, by how many words, and what the span is for individual words.

The profile of the categories, in order of the totals, is

Category	Number of words
08 Emotion	7
06 Mental faculties	6
12 Social interaction	5
02 Life and death	4
11 Action and utility	4
03 Matter and measurement	3
05 Existence	3
07 Opinion	3
16 Religion	2
04 Material needs	1
09 Language and communication	1
10 Possession	1
14 Law and Order	1
15 Property	1
01 Physical World	0
13 Peace and War	0





## **The additional categories**

In this section I shall detail the categories that appear in the chart above in order of the number of entries they contain:

### **08 Emotion**

<i>hēan</i>	<b>08.01.03.01</b>	<b>Despondency: .Depressed, sad, troubled:</b>
<i>nearones</i>	<b>08.01.03.03</b>	<b>Anxiety</b>
<i>earm</i>	<b>08.01.03.06</b>	<b>Adversity, affliction: .Calamitous</b>
<i>iermþ</i>	<b>08.01.03.06</b>	<b>Adversity, affliction</b>
<i>þearf(ig)end</i>	<b>08.01.03.06</b>	<b>Adversity, affliction: .Wretched man</b>
<i>hēan</i>	<b>08.01.03.06.01</b>	<b>Affliction, misfortune, calamity: .Unfortunate, suffering misfortune</b>
<i>þearfendlice</i>	<b>08.01.03.06.01</b>	<b>Affliction, misfortune, calamity: .Unhappily, miserably</b>

This is the group with the largest number of items. Unsurprisingly it expresses the unhappy feelings that would associate with this field. The items are clustered closely together within the categories.

### **06 Mental faculties**

<i>nied habban</i>	<b>06.02.04</b>	<b>Necessity, inevitability: .to be under necessity (to do)</b>
<i>þearflic</i>	<b>06.02.04</b>	<b>Necessity, inevitability: .Necessary, needful</b>
<i>þurfan</i>	<b>06.02.04</b>	<b>Necessity, inevitability: .To be obliged, compelled by destiny</b>
<i>nied habban</i>	<b>06.02.04.01</b>	<b>Want, need: .To need, have need, require</b>
<i>þurfan</i>	<b>06.02.04.01</b>	<b>Want, need: .To need (to do)</b>

*þearfa*      **06.02.04.01.01** **Need, distress, straits, difficulty: .Needing,  
unprovided, lacking**

The range here reflects the complex nature of *nīed* where there appear to be two strands, the 'compulsion' component and the 'lack' component. These are present also in *þurfa/n*. The other item containing *nīed* in this field is the compound *nīedwædla* where in compounds the *nīed* element usually implies force.

## **12 Social interaction**

<i>unmaga</i>	<b>12.01.01.07</b>	<b>A follower: ..A dependent, orphan</b>
<i>hēan</i>	<b>12.01.01.11</b>	<b>The common people: .Common, not noble ..Of lowly rank</b>
<i>unrīce</i>	<b>12.01.01.11</b>	<b>The common people: ..Of lowly rank</b>
<i>iermp</i>	<b>12.08.06</b>	<b>Moral evil, depravity</b>

The connotations in this group are of dependent, subordinate status and the items are close together. The exception is *iermp* which is the only headword in its category, which is a small category of fifteen words with a strong negative sense of moral defect and impurity.

## **02 Life and death**

<i>unspēdig</i>	<b>02.01.03.02</b>	<b>Barrenness, sterility: .Barren, unproductive</b>
<i>wædl</i>	<b>02.01.03.02</b>	<b>Barrenness, sterility</b>
<i>nearones</i>	<b>02.08.03</b>	<b>Pain, bodily discomfort</b>
<i>hīenþo</i>	<b>02.08.04</b>	<b>Hurt, injury, damage</b>

The meanings here fall into two strands with two words each, of which the words *nearones* and *hīenbo* are not close together in the category. The presence of *wædl* in the category **Barrenness, sterility** provides one of only two additional categories outside the category concerning poverty, that *wædl-* appears in, the other being **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want**.

## 11 Action and utility

<i>pearflic</i>	<b>11.07.03</b>	Use, advantage, profit: .Advantageous, profitable, beneficial
<i>nacod</i>	<b>11.08.03</b>	Needless, useless, unprofitable: (of words) empty, not backed by deeds
<i>hēan</i>	<b>11.08.04</b>	Vanity, idleness, frivolity: . Of little worth/importance
<i>nearones</i>	<b>11.11.01</b>	A physical difficulty, strait: .Physical inconvenience, difficulty

This is an interesting group. At first sight it seems to contain opposing meanings in *pearflic* and *nacod*. *Pearflic* reflects the strand of 'to need to do something' as in *burfan* whereas *nacod* is here as a metaphoric extension. The search of the *TOE* to find *hēan* in this subcategory led me to the entry, in the same subcategory, of *lodrung* entered in **11.08.04** in the category **.A nonsense, triviality**. The word is connected to *loddere* which is also in **15.01.06. Poverty, indigence** in the category **..Beggar, person supported by alms**. It is interesting that both *hēan* and *loddere* have this connection with each other in both these apparently diverse lexical categories.

## 03 Matter and measurement

<i>pearfendlic</i>	<b>03.03.04.05</b>	Insufficiency, lack, want: .(of things) scanty, scarce,
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meagre

<i>wāḍla</i>	<b>03.03.04.05</b>	<b>Insufficiency, lack, want: .Deficient in, poor in, wanting</b>
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<i>wāḍlian</i>	<b>03.03.04.05</b>	<b>Insufficiency, lack, want: .To be in want of, lack</b>
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This is the only category in the *TOE* in which *wāḍl-* appears, apart from the categories concerned with poverty and begging (**15.01.06.01**). It is striking that a word which appears to dominate one category has little polysemy outside it. The polysemy it does have, is closely connected to its main category,

## 05 Existence

<i>ḥurfan</i>	<b>05.04</b>	<b>Fate, lot, fortune, destiny: .To be compelled by destiny</b>
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<i>nearones</i>	<b>05.10.02</b>	<b>Narrowness, scantiness of space</b>
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<i>nacod</i>	<b>05.10.05.04.13</b>	<b>A removal of that which obscures or conceals. Not covered, without covering</b>
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This aspect of *ḥurfan* has arisen before, though here with the added component of destiny. The other two categories reflect a literal sense for *nearones* and *nacod*.

## 07 Opinion

<i>hienḥ(o)</i>	<b>07.09</b>	<b>Shame, disgrace</b>
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<i>hēan</i>	<b>07.09.02</b>	<b>Disgrace, shaming, humiliation: .Humbled, shamed, brought low</b>
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<i>hēan</i>	<b>07.09.03</b>	<b>Infamy, ignominy, shame: ..Of deeds, feelings etc.</b>
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This group echoes the emotional content of the first, in that the emotion is associated with the state of poverty. All the items here, as in the first group, are clustered together.

## 16 Religious

*ælmeslic*      16.02.04.09      Almsgiving, charitableness: .Charitable

This instance of *ælmeslic* has the reciprocal meaning to that of *ælmeslic* in the category **Poverty, indigence**, in that here the act of charity is the focus, whereas in **Poverty, indigence** it is the recipient who is the focus.

## 04 Material needs

*nacod*      04.04.07.02.01      Nakedness: .Bare

This is the literal dimension of *nacod* as would be expected.

## 09 Language and Communication

*nacod*      09.03.04.03      Plain, simple

This is *nacod* in a metaphoric function.

## 10 Possession

*earm*      10.02      Want, lack: .Destitute of, without

I was surprised not to find more items in this category, and it appears that there is a qualitative difference in the sense 'lack' of this category in which there is a lack of

something and the state of 'lacking' which is poverty. It may represent the sense 'lack' which can be applied to anything, concrete such as 'horses' or abstract such as 'good sense' in which case the context will show whether the sense refers to poverty in material things or some more neutral things. It is interesting that in this subcategory which is **.Destitute of, without:** is found, beside *earm*, *dāllēas* which does not appear in the poverty category. This is surprising because the presence of PDE 'destitute' in the category headings brings with it images of poverty, because of the frame 'destitute' occupies in PDE.

#### 14 Law and Order

*feohlēas*      **14.03.03.09.02 Atonement: .Not atonable by money**

I was uncertain whether to include this meaning as it appears to have the sense 'the inadequacy of money' rather than 'the lack of money' in that it is not possible to atone for the act with money.

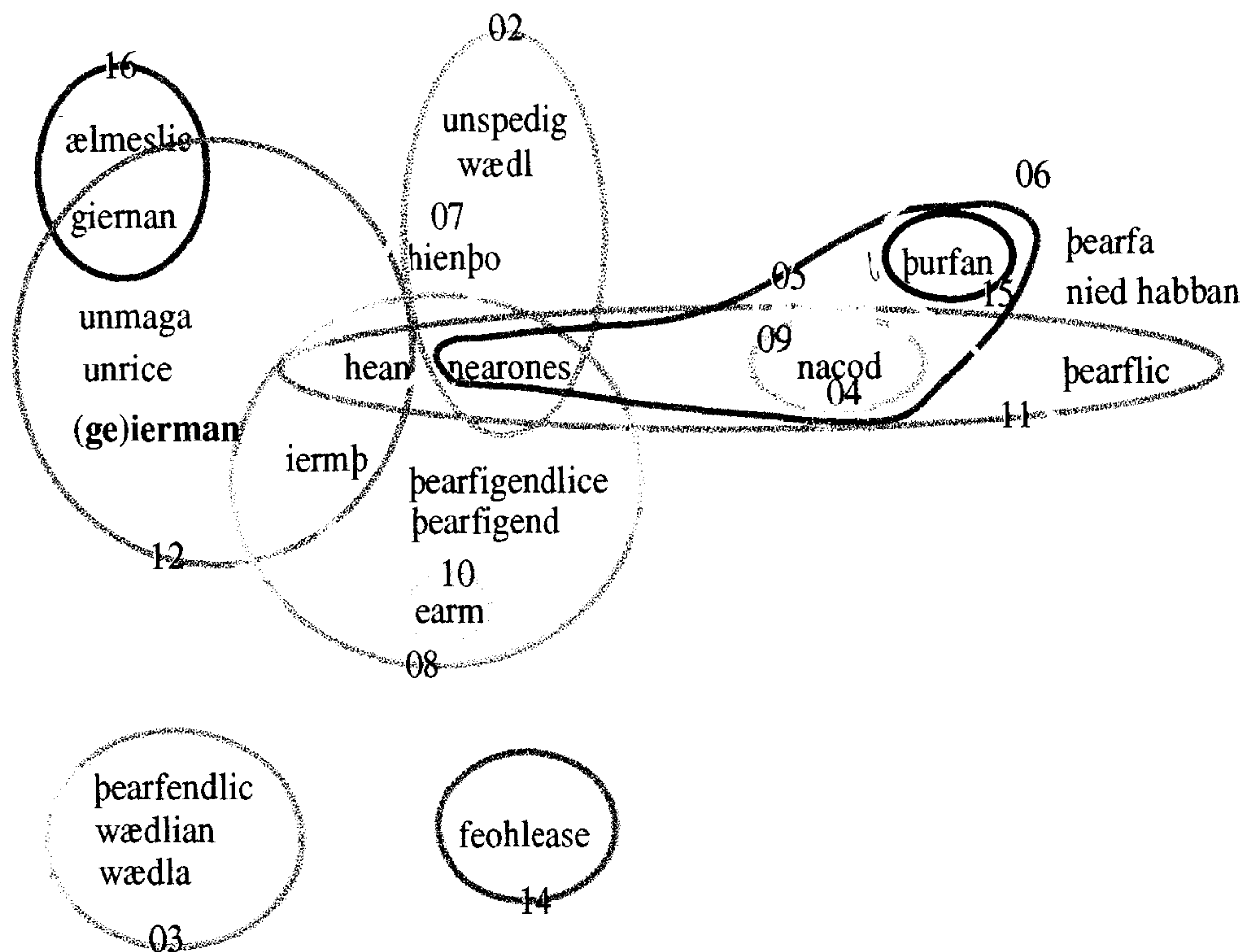
#### 15 Property

*purfan*      **15.04      A debt, due: .To owe (money etc)**

This is the strand of **purfan** that has appeared before, with overtones of necessity and compulsion but here in a financial context.



Venn diagram of the words in the *TOE* poverty and begging categories, in the additional categories in which they appear.



02. Life and Death

03. Matter and Measurement

04. Material Needs

05. Existence

06. Mental Faculties

07. Opinion

08. Emotion

09. Language and Communication

10. Possession

11. Action and Utility

12. Social Interaction

13. Peace and War - none

14. Law and Order

15. Property

16. Religion

17. Work - none

18. Leisure - none

## Summary

This section has concentrated on meanings that are outside the poverty category. First I shall look at the groups of individual words, and then at the nature of the additional categories that they inhabit.

### Individual words

There are items which I have grouped together as they are different forms of the same root. Of these forms which are based on, or which contain:

*þearf*- appear in five additional categories

*þurfan* appear in four additional categories

*wædl*- appear in two additional categories

*spēd* appear in one additional category

*feoh* appear in one additional category

*ælmes* appear in one additional category - but this denotes a giver of alms

*hafen/hafol*, *feasceaft* and *næft/næftig* do not appear in any additional categories.

The items which appear in the poverty category only once each, and with no other associated forms, are interesting in that some of them have membership of many more additional categories than the items above, which appear more frequently in the category.

*hēan* appears in eight additional categories

*nacod* appears in six additional categories, although two of those are discounted (see above)

*nearones* appears in four additional categories

*hienþ(o)* appears in three additional categories, although one of these is discounted (see above)

*earm* appears in four additional categories, although two of those are discounted (see above)

*iermþ* appears in two additional categories

*nīed habban* appears in two additional categories

*unrīce* and *unmaga* appear in one additional category each.

## **The nature of the additional categories**

I shall consider the categories under the eighteen major categories which form the primary arrangement of the *TOE*, which goes on to subdivide those. They are arranged broadly in a form which begins with The External World, then The Mental World and then Society (Kay, Sylvester and Wotherspoon 2001: 174-5). They are considered here in the order of those with the most items from the category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** through to those with the fewest. Any with no items are omitted. The categories are described in terms of their senses but using the language the *TOE* uses to describe them. They are not given their strict category headings.

### **08. Emotion**

This has seven items. The items are clustered closely in subjective emotional areas concerned with 'despondency and anxiety', and 'adversity and affliction.'

### **06. Mental Facilities**

There are six items. All these are accounted for by the additional senses of *þearf-*, *þurfan* and *nīed habban* in terms of 'necessity' and 'to need to do' something. There is one instance of *þearfa* however which is in the category to do with 'needing, lacking.'



## 12. Social Interaction

There are five items. The items are clustered closely together in areas concerned with dependent status and the common people although *iermb* is alone in a small category concerned with 'moral evil' and 'depravity' where it is the head item.

## 02. Life and Death

There are four items. The entries here divide into two distinct strands. *Wædl* and *unspēdig* are both in a category concerned with 'barrenness and sterility' but *nearones* and *hienþ(o)* are close to each other in areas of 'pain, bodily discomfort' and 'hurt, injury.'

## 11. Action and Utility

There are four items. This is an interesting group. At first sight it seems that there are two opposing categories as *þearflic* appears in a category headed with 'advantageous, profitable' while *nacod* carries the heading 'useless, unprofitable' but on examination it appears that *þearflic* reflects the sense 'to need to do' something and *nacod* is acting as a metaphor for 'words not backed by deeds.' *Nearones* is here as a metaphor for 'physical difficulty.' *Hēan* makes an interesting appearance in 'vanity, idleness, frivolity' where it is with *lodrung* which does not appear in the poverty category but whose form *loddere* does.

## 03 Matter and Measurement

There are three items. *þearf-* and *wædl-* are in the same category to do with 'insufficiency, lack and want' which is not surprising.

## 05 Existence

*Purfan* is present in an extension of its sense of 'to have to' in 'compelled by destiny',

and *nearones* and *nacod* are present in their concrete senses of 'scantness of space' and 'not covered' respectively.

## **07 Opinion**

There are three items which cluster around the concepts of 'shame and disgrace' although the concept of 'to be humbled' is also present.

## **04 Material Needs**

There is one item. This is *nacod* in its literal sense.

## **09 Language and Communication**

There is one item. This is a metaphorical use of *nacod* with the sense of 'plain, simple' and it is interesting that this sense comes up again in the eME category in *Orm* with *unnorne*.

## **10 Possession**

There is one item. This is the sense of *earm* as 'want, lack, destitute of' which in some ways might be expected to have a greater number of items.

## **14 Law and Order**

There is one item. This is for *feohlēas* but has the sense 'not atoneable by money.'

## **15 Property**

There is one item. This again is a reflection of the sense 'to have to' that *purfan* carries as it is to do with 'a debt.'

## 16 Religion

There is one item. Although *ælmes* is present as *ælmeslic* this refers to the donor of alms as opposed to the recipient of alms.

It is not surprising to find clusters of items from the poverty category in other categories such as the emotional and personal opinion categories. It is striking how some areas surface through the polysemy of individual items in different periods but in similar ways, for example negative morality which is still in the category later through the polysemy of *wrecche* and the senses of 'plain and simple' that *nacod* brings here and *unnorne* brings later in the twelfth century in the *Ormulum*.



### 3. The Peterborough Chronicle.

#### Introduction

The *Peterborough Chronicle*, known as the E text of the *Anglo Saxon Chronicles*, and referred to as E here, is in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Laud Misc. 636 and contains annals for 60BC to AD 1154. It extends over seventy years longer than any other version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and is the only extant version which continues into the twelfth century<sup>9</sup> as it is the only one that continues after 1080.<sup>10</sup> Its content is one of the main reasons for assigning it to Peterborough, as it contains both in its Interpolations and in its Continuations material which deals with events which centre on the monastery there. The evidence of its handwriting supports this as the hand of the second scribe closely resembles the hand found in two other Peterborough manuscripts, which are the correcting hand in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 134 and the hand in Society of Antiquaries, MS. 60 known as the *Black Book of Peterborough*, folios 6-71. It is surprising that it is not mentioned in the medieval Peterborough catalogues as it appears to have remained in Peterborough after its composition. It is thought likely that this copy of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was made at Peterborough in about 1121 possibly to replace a book lost in the library fire there in 1116.

The E text appears to be written by two scribes. The first wrote from folio 1 to folio 88v line 9 which is the end of the annal for 1131. These entries seem to have been written more or less continuously except for the annals for 1122 to 1131 which appear to be less consistent. The current consensus is that having brought the

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<sup>9</sup> Except for a fragment of a vernacular Chronicle, London, British Library MS Cotton Domitian IX, folio 9 which is known as H and has annals for 1113-14 the content of which is not shared by E.

<sup>10</sup> For a full discussion of the history, sources and textual relationships of the *Peterborough Chronicle* see Irvine 2004 on which this introduction draws heavily.

Chronicle up to date at 1122 the scribe then added material at different times over the next ten or so years. These annals, Irvine (2004) suggests, were written in six blocks: (i.) 1122; (ii.) 1123; (iii.) 1124; (iv.) 1125 to 1126 *lande* (at folio 85r7); (v.) 1126 *On þes ilces geares* (at folio 85r7) to 1127; (vi.) 1128 to 1131. These annals from 1122 to 1131, are known as the First Continuation. The second scribe wrote the annals from 1132 to 1154 (folios 88r10 to 91v) and the uniform appearance of these entries has lead to the conclusion that they were probably written in one block. These are the annals known as the Second Continuation. The First Continuation and the Second Continuation are unique to E. Also unique to E are the Peterborough Interpolations which are twenty insertions throughout the text until 1122 and these focus on events that occur at or affect the abbey at Peterborough.

The textual relationships between the E text and the other six extant manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are extremely complicated and are detailed in Irvine (2004 p xxxii ff.). The Interpolations and Continuations made at Peterborough do not appear in any of the other versions and I have made them my main focus in this section as it seems likely that these portions of the text were composed or, in the case of the Interpolations translated (often from Latin sources), contemporaneously with their entry. This means they are probably representative of very early Middle English or late Old English writing. With regard to the remaining body of the text, the difficulties arise that are often present with writing in Old English soon after the Conquest. Although the text is fairly securely dated for this complex period, the main body of the text is copied from earlier Old English exemplars. Laing (1993 p 4) observes that twelfth and thirteenth century copyists of Old English usually attempt straight transcription rather than modifying the language to be more in line with that which they would spontaneously write themselves. It is not likely, then, that the evidence of lexical choice in the annals up to 1122, other than in the Interpolations, is going to provide reliable evidence for the nature of the contemporary content of the language used for 'poverty.' For the annals after 1122 there is always the caveat,



however, that even where it seems likely that a text is a contemporary, and maybe even an original composition, there are constraints such as genre and register and that this cannot be assumed to be a reflection of the current state of spoken English or even of written English in other circumstances.

In the following, references for citations are to the annal, given by its date and folio, followed by the page number from Irvine's edition (2004) which I have used as my base text. I have omitted editorial marks.

I have chosen this text for more detailed study because the Interpolations were likely to have been composed and translated as they were being written and the Continuations are likely to have been composed in the same way.

There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.
6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context



of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

## **Annals up to 1121**

There is a complex textual relationship between E and the other extant versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Irvine in her edition of E gives a detailed analysis (2004 pp xxxii - xc) and I do not propose to undertake a full discussion. Irvine finds a close relationship between E and C<sup>11</sup> and D.<sup>12</sup> For the period up to 1022 every annal is shared at least in part by all three manuscripts. It seems that C and E share a source for the annals up to 1022 and for 1042-3b (Irvine p. lxxv). For 1023-43b however there are no full annals in common and the parts of annals shared by all three manuscripts are sparse. Irvine suggests this may indicate a dissatisfaction with the annals concerning Cnut and his sons and this makes it likely that this interpolation in E can be attributed to a version of the Chronicle made at St Augustine's in Canterbury which the annals in E from 1043b to 1063 also use as a source, where it is relatively independent of C and D. The annals from 1064 to 1080 appear to share a source with D and both D and E include additional northern material, not always shared, which may originally, though much altered, have come from a set of northern annals. Irvine adds that correspondences between E and twelfth century Latin chronicles suggest that a copy close to E but without the Peterborough material was available when the compiler of E was working around 1121 (lxxxiv). The annals from 1081 to 1121 are southern rather than northern and when or where these annals were combined with the earlier annals now in E is not known but the Waverly annals<sup>13</sup> for 1000 to 1121 are a close translation of an Anglo-Saxon Chronicle close to E. This is a much simplified account of the intertextual connections between E and other versions of the Chronicle and there are connections with additional texts such as Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*

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<sup>11</sup> C is London, British Library MS. Cotton Tiberius B. I

<sup>12</sup> D is London, British Library MS. Cotton Tiberius B. IV

<sup>13</sup> Luard *Annales Monasterii* cited in Irvine (2004 p lxxxiv n)

so that what is presented in the E text annals up to 1121 can be seen to be the product of a considerable history of layers of sources, composition and copying which has corresponding influence on lexis.

In light of this assessment I will not analyse the 'poverty' content of the annals up to 1121 in great detail but there are some interesting contrasts in the lexical choices made in the Interpolations and in, and between, the two Peterborough Continuations so that some comments on the annals up to 1121 would be of interest.

### **Words from the *TOE* 'poverty' category**

The poor themselves do not figure largely in the *Peterborough Chronicle* although people reduced to poverty and misery by war, famine, pestilence and the Viking raids do and it is interesting to see what words are used of their state.

Although there are some instances of *un/þearfe* and *neode* they are not used in the sense 'poverty' or in any sense connected with it but are used in the sense 'need/necessity' and I do not propose to examine these.

#### ***ælmessan***

There are three instances, close together in the annals for 887, 888 and 890, in which the names are given, in almost identical sentences, of those who take alms to Rome:

Æðelhelm ealdorman lādde Weastseaxna ælmessan

7 Ælfredes cyninges to Rome.

887 34r/53

Her lādde Beocca ealdorman Westseaxna ælmessan

7 Ælfredes cyninges to Rome, 7 Æðelswið cwæn seo

wæs Ælfredes swustor cyninges

888 34r/53

Her lǣdde Beornhelm abbot Westseaxna ælmeſſan  
to Rome 7 Ælfreðes cyninges

890 34r/53

This is not to do with the recipients of alms and it is not clear from the context why this appears at this juncture and is repeated for three years that are almost consecutive. Swanton notes (1996 p 81 n) that this is possibly the origin of the tribute later known as Peter's Pence. The entry for the intervening year, 889, simply says that in that year no one travelled to Rome except two runners whom King Alfred sent with letters.

### *earme*

This occurs as the most common description of people or nations who are suffering, and *reowlic* 'pitiable' to describe the times is also common. I have found nineteen instances of *earme* and its forms.<sup>14</sup> It is used with a wide range of senses, usually in the generalised sense of 'miserable' or 'wretched'.

### Material poverty

There is an instance in which the 'material poverty' sense is clear from the context. After William the Conqueror's death money was distributed to the poor for his soul:

7 into ælcere ſcire man ſeond hundred punda foes  
to dælanne earme mannan for his ſaule

1086 66r/99

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<sup>14</sup> Annals: 684-1; 793-2; 999-1; 1011-3; 1014-1; 1086-7; 1091-1; 1096-1; 1104-2.



### Strong disapproval

In the *TOE* the only entry under the head word of the category **12.08.06 Moral evil, depravity** is *iermp*. There are two instances in which *earmlīce* seems to be used in this strong sense. Although the closest entry in the *TOE* for *earmlīce* is **08.01.03.07.04 Severity, harshness .Grievously, fiercely: *earmlīce***, the sense in context appears closer to 'moral evil, depravity' where, in the annal for 684 churches in Ireland are burnt:

Her on ðissum geare sende Ecgferð here on Scottas 7 Briht  
his ealdorman mid, 7 earmlīce hi Godes cyrican hyndan 7 bærndon.  
Here in this year Ecgfrith sent a raiding-army among the Irish and  
his Ealdorman Briht with it and they grievously abused and burnt  
God's churches.

684 19v/33

The burning of God's churches would be a serious matter to a monk and indeed the same word is used to describe the sacking of Lindisfarne by the heathen in 793:

earmlīce heðenra manna hergung adiligode Godes cyrican in  
Lindisfarenae þurh reaflac 7 mansleht  
the raiding of heathen men grievously devastated God's church in  
Lindisfarne through looting and slaughter

793 25v-26r/42

## Suffering

*Earme* is used of a wide range of suffering and misery, from that emotional suffering caused by fear of the terrible portents that frighten the people in 793, to the physical and material suffering caused by the Danes, such as in 1011 when the people are described as *earme folc* as is the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is captured and subsequently martyred, and who is in *earmðe* and the town of Canterbury itself which is described as *ærman*. Twice sailors are in conditions that are described this way, once caused by the delay of an attack in 999 and once in 1091 when William's 'ship army' is destroyed. Those who were lured by Urban to fight the heathen and suffered in Hungary in 1096 were described this way too as were the people who counted on Cnut's help in 1014 but who were betrayed when he took ship and left them.

*Earme* is used in conjunction with *wræcce* in two annals, 1086 and 1104 which are discussed below.

## *heane*

I have found only two instances of *heane* and one of those is in the negative. In the annal for the year 755 is the passage about the feud between Cynewulf and Cyneheard in which Cynewulf, the king, was surrounded when he was with a group of women:

7 he on ða duru eode 7 þa unheanlice hine werode

and he went to the door and then defended himself not shamefully

755 22v/38

This appears to be connected to the sense the *TOE* has as a head word in **07.09 Shamefully, ignominiously**. The other instance could also have this sense but occurs when the discussion is about the death of William the Conqueror in the annal for 1086:

Se scearpa deað þe ne forlet ne rice men ne heane  
seo hine genam.

The sharp death which spares neither the rich/powerful nor  
the poor/lowly seized him.

1086 64r/96

and here I think this is to do with 'poor'. It is not possible though to distinguish among the antonyms 'rich'/'powerful' or 'poor'/'lowly.' Usually in the *Peterborough Chronicle* *rice* seems to have the foremost meaning 'powerful' in that it is often used of religious as well as secular figures, but clearly they also were wealthy although if they were churchmen they were not so much wealthy in their own right as through the church.

### **Words from OE but not in the *TOE* 'poverty' category**

#### *wrecche*

The first instance I have found of *wrecche* is in the annal for 1083. This is in the section from 1081 to 1121 which is southern rather than northern and whose source is unknown. I have not found any instances of *wrecche* in any earlier annals. The usual word in earlier annals in contexts where *wrecche* and its forms might have been used is *earme* and its forms.

The instance in 1083 occurs in a reference to the dispute between the monks at Glastonbury and their abbot Thurstan. The chronicler appears to be on the side of the monks, who are misgoverned by the abbot but speak to him lovingly about it. His response is to bring armed men into the chapter and even those monks who run into the church are attacked:

þa wreccan munecas lagon onbuton þam weofode,  
7 sume crupon under



the wretched monks lay around the altar, and some  
crept under

083 62r/93

There is an element of pity here, as the chronicle has already made its support for the monks clear. This is not connected with 'material poverty'.

### **Annals in which *earme* and *wræcce* appear together.**

There are two annals in which *wræcce* appears with *earme* and these are the annals for 1086 and for 1104. In each annal *wræcce* appears only once while *earme* appears more than once.<sup>15</sup> The annal for 1086 is the annal for the year in which William the Conqueror died.

swyðe mycel hungor ofer eall Engleland, þet manig hundred manna  
earmlice deaðe swulton þurh þone hungor. Eala hu earmlice 7 hu  
reowlic tid wæs ða, ða ða wræccæ men lægen fordrifene fullneah  
to deaðe, 7 syððan com se scearpa hungor 7 adyde hi mid ealle.  
Hwam ne mæg earmian swylcere tide?

a very great hunger all over England, so that many hundreds of  
people died miserable deaths because of the hunger. Oh how  
miserable and how pitiful a time it was. Then the wretched people  
lay driven full near death, and after came a sharp hunger and  
finished them off. Who could not pity such a time?

1086 63v/95

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<sup>15</sup> An instance of *earme* is discussed above in which it is clearly a reference to 'material poverty'.

Apart from adding lexical variety it is not evident that the addition of *wræccæ* adds any sense that we can perceive that would not have been conveyed equally through the additional use of *earme* in this passage, even though it is the case that *wræccæ* is applied directly to the people while *earme* is applied to the death and to the time.<sup>16</sup>

Through the remainder of the annal *earme* is used to signify oppressed people. The context here is how the king allowed things to go to the highest bidder regardless of how they had been acquired:

7 se cyng hit let þam men to handa þe him eallra meast bead 7 ne  
rohte na hu swiðe synlice þa gerefan hit begeatan of earme  
annon ne hu manige unlaga hi dydon.

and the king let it go into the hands of the man who bid the most of  
and did not count how sinfully the reeves got it from wretched men  
nor how many unlawful things they did.

1086 63v/95

There is a possible reference to forced labour on castles that is referred to later in the time of Stephen:

Castelas he let wyrcean 7 earme men swiðe swencean  
had castles built and wretched men grievously oppressed

1086 65r/97

and William the Conqueror's hunting policy pleased neither rich nor poor, with the

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<sup>16</sup> Clark (1952-3 p 72) notes that there is a rare construction of *earmian* here in which it is used in an impersonal construction, which she suggests may be a calque on Latin constructions using *miseret* and *paenitet*.

sense 'everyone':

his rice men hit mændon 7 þa earne men hit beceorodan.  
his rich men lamented it and the poor men complained of it

1086 65r/97

Although the antonym here for *earne* is *rice* the sense would be equally well served if the foregrounded elements in each word were to do with power and powerlessness rather than material wealth and poverty, though all could be present.

Nis eaðe to asecenne þises landes earmða þe hit to þysan timan  
dreogende wæs þurh mistlice 7 mænigfealdlice unriht 7 gylð  
þæ næfre ne geswican ne ne ateorodon; 7 æfre ealswa se cyng  
for, full hergung þurh his hired uppon his wræccea folc wæs  
7 þæronmang foroft bærneta 7 manslihtas:

eall þis wæs God mid to gremienne

7 þas arme leode mid to tregienne

It is not easy to describe the misery that this land suffered at this  
time through various and many injustices and taxes which never  
stopped or lessened; and always wherever the king went there was  
full raiding because of his retinue upon his poor people and among  
that very often burning and the slaughter of men:

All this was to anger God

and to harass this wretched people

1104 75v/113



Again here *wræccea* and *earme* seem near synonyms. It is interesting that in the section of verse *earme* becomes *arme* and this is the only instance I could find of this spelling in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. This may be a fragment of something quoted there as these two lines in OE form a rhyming couplet.

### Summary

Items from the *TOE* 'poverty' category are *earme*, and *heane*. *Ælmessan* appears as tribute taken to Rome but there is no other mention of *ælmes*.

*Earme* is found throughout the earlier annals and usually means 'miserable' or 'wretched'. There is one instance where it does mean 'material poverty' which is when it is applied to the men who receive money after William the Conqueror's death for the good of his soul. It is used with an element of disapproval when it is used of the burning of churches in Ireland and the sacking of Lindisfarne.

There are two instances of *heane* and it may contain an element of poverty when it is used as one of the antonymic pair with *rice* to express 'everyone'. It is used of Cynewulf defending himself as *unheanlice* with the sense 'not shamefully.'

From OE but not included in the *TOE* 'poverty' category is *wrecche*. This is not used through the earlier annals, where in the places that *wrecche* might be used, *earme* appears. It is used in annals 1083 and 1104, in which *earme* also appears. The first is applied to the monks at Glastonbury as they are being attacked in the church, and the chronicler has already made his support for the monks clear. The second, in the annal for 1104, describes the people who suffer under the demands of the king's court. It seems to be a near synonym for *earme* which appears in a rhyming couplet which ends the passage.

## The Interpolations

These twenty Interpolations, all of which relate to Peterborough, were inserted by the first scribe when he was copying the annals up to 1121. Irvine (2004: xci) says that he inserted some passages while he was copying, but some were added later, sometimes spilling over into the margins. They contain more errors than the rest of the text and Irvine suggests that the scribe may have been having greater difficulty reading the exemplars from which these interpolations were made. Some of the sources relate to documents that survive from Peterborough, largely Latin charters and transcripts. There are some links with a Latin chronicle of Peterborough Abbey by Hugh Candidus which is mid-twelfth century. The relationship between Hugh Candidus' chronicle and E is complex but Irvine suggests that Hugh Candidus has sometimes drawn on E and sometimes may have independently used the same sources.

There are five interpolations which contain material with poverty vocabulary.

## Words from the *TOE* poverty category

*ærm*

### Material poverty

There is an element of material poverty in this instance. *Ælfgifu* and her brother were overseas with the Abbot of Peterborough, *Ælfsige*, who went to the Bonneval monastery and:

Fand þær ærm stede, ærm

abbot 7 ærme muneces, forþan þe hi forhergode wæron.

Found there a poor foundation, a poor abbot and poor monks

because they had been pillaged.

Ælfsige bought the remains of Saint Florentine from them, except the head, for five hundred pounds.

Collocation

1013                      ærme . . . forhergode

Antonym

None.

*haueleste*

Material poverty

This interpolation is based on a Latin document comprising a Bull of Pope Agatho granting privileges to the abbey.<sup>17</sup> Here it says that any man who has made a vow to travel to Rome but is prevented by 'poverty' can gain equal virtue from travelling to Peterborough:

hwilc man swa haueð behaten to faren to Rome  
and he ne muge hit forðian, ouðer for untrumnisse . . . ouðer for  
haueleste ouðer for hwilces cinnes oðer neod he ne muge  
þær cumon

675 31/24

This is a clear instance of 'material poverty'. It is the only instance of *haueleste* and is a Latin translation.

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<sup>17</sup> This document is considered to be a forgery.



## Collocation

675                    untrumnisse . . . haueleste

### *neod*

#### Need/necessity

In the passage cited above the use of *neod* in connection with the lord is presumably when the necessity of providing service to the lord overrides the desire of the individual to travel to Rome and the 'other kinds of need' are a reference to the constraints of general circumstances. These do not seem to be needs connected to 'material poverty.'

hwilc man swa haueð behaten to faren to Rome  
and he ne muge hit forðian . . . ouðer for lauerdes  
neode . . . ouðer for hwilces cinnes oðer neod he ne muge  
þær cumon

675 31/24

## Collocation/Antonym

None.

### *þurfe*

#### Need/necessity

This is a reference to the spiritual needs of the soul, not needs connected to 'material poverty'.

ic haue geseond æfter þe for mine saule þurfe

656 27/13

Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **Words from OE but not in the *TOE* poverty category**

*wrecche*

#### Material poverty

As with many of the instances of words such as *wrecce* there is probably a component of general misery but there is a connection to material wealth and the subsequent lack of it also. This is a reference to the death of Abbot Leofric who more than any man before him or since, it is said, enriched Peterborough with gold and silver, vestments and land. After his death, the implication is, 'golden' became 'wrecce':

Pa wearð

Gildene Burh to Wrecche Burh.

1066 87/20

Collocation

None.

Antonym

1066                      Gildene . . . Wrecche

## Miscellaneous

There is one passage which contains an antonym to *rice* but which is a phrase rather than a word, in the interpolation in the annal for 870. This concerns the Danes who came to Peterborough and destroyed it:

On þa ilcan tima þa comon hi to Medeshamstede, beorndon 7  
bræcon, slogon abbot 7 munecas, 7 ealle þet hi þær fundon,  
macedon hit þa þet ær wæs ful rice, þa hit wearð to nan þing.

At that same time they came to the monastery at *Medeshamstede*  
and burned and demolished it, and slew the abbot and monks and all  
that they found there, reduced it so that what had been very rich was  
as if it were nothing.

870 30v/48

The contrast here between *rice* and *nan þing* is not limited to 'material wealth' and *rice* contains senses of power and presence which are retained in PDE but not so much in the foreground as they were in eME.

Collocation

None.

Antonym

870      rice . . . nan þing



## Summary

Items from the *TOE* 'poverty' category are *ærm*, *haueleste*, *neode* and *þurf*. *Ærm* is used of the monastery of Bonneval after it has been pillaged and probably contains an element of 'material poverty.' *Haueleste* is specifically 'materially poor' and is in a list of reasons for not being able to go to Rome. *Neode* and *þurf* are expressing a general need.

OE but not in the *TOE* 'poverty' category is *wrecche*. There is one instance that describes the condition of the monastery at Peterborough after the death of Abbot Leofric who enriched it as no other had, so probably contains an element of 'material poverty' as well as other emotional elements.

## The Continuations

Parkes (1983: 127) considers that the scribes of the continuations of the Peterborough Chronicle provide one of the closest parallels to the scribal practices of the *Ormulum* among surviving manuscripts of English texts.

## The First Continuation

These are the annals from 1122 to 1131 which were written by the same scribe as the Interpolations.

## Words from the *TOE* poverty category

*ærme*

### Material poverty

In many of these instances there are elements such as 'misery' but there seems also to be a context of material deprivation. This is not suffering caused by, for example,

pestilence but by material depredation:

he seoð þet man læt þet ærme folc mid ealle unrihte: ærost man hem  
beræfoð her eahte and siðon man hem ofslæð. Ful heui gær wæs hit:  
se man þe æni god heafde, him me hit beræfode mid strange geoldes  
7 mid strange motes; þe nan ne heafde stærf of hungor.

he (God) sees that the poor/miserable people are oppressed with  
every injustice: first they are robbed of their goods and then they are  
killed. A very heavy year this was. The man who had any goods was  
robbed of it by severe taxes and by severe courts; he that had none  
died of hunger.

1124 84r/126

### Despicably

This instance refers to the king's act of granting the Abbey of Peterborough to the  
pluralist Henry of Poitu.

Pus earmlice wæs þone abbotrice gifen betwix Cristesmesse 7  
Candelmesseat Lundene.

Thus despicably was the abbacy given between Christmas and  
Candlemass in London.

1127 86r/129

This is an event that leads to great theft and impoverishment for Peterborough but

here refers to the nature of the act, not to any material deprivation that follows it.

The following instance contains the same sense of the effect of a despicable act on others. This is of Hugh of the Temple<sup>18</sup> who collected treasure and called people to Jerusalem where he said a great battle would ensue between the Christians and the heathen. When the people arrived it was 'nothing but lies' *læsunge* and they were 'despicably' *earmlice* afflicted *swengt*.

He seide þet fulle feoht was sett betwenen ða Cristene 7 þa heðene:  
þa hi þider comen, ða ne was hit noht buton læsunge. Pus earmlice  
weard eall þet folc swengt.

He said that a great fight was set between the Christians and the  
heathens, but when they came there it was nothing but lies. So  
they were despicably afflicted.

1128 86v/130

Collocation

1124 ærme . . . unrihte

Antonym

None.

## Words from OE but not in the *TOE* poverty category

*wrecche*

None of the instances of *wrecche* have the specific sense 'material poverty' but two

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<sup>18</sup> Hugh de Payns, founder of the Knights Templar.



instances appear in that context in the First Continuation.

### Material poverty

There are two instances which refer to the state of Peterborough Abbey under the rule of the pluralist Henry of Poitu. He was involved in robbing the Abbey and sending its treasure abroad and the reference here is to the state of the monks and the foundation under his depredations. The impoverishment of the Abbey is an important focus in the account, and the consequent unhappy state of the foundation:

God ælmihtig haue his milce ofer þet wrecche stede!

God almighty have mercy on the wretched place.

1128 86v/130

There is another instance which refers to the same events and comes after the account of how Henry had promised the Abbot of Cluny that he would get the Abbacy of Peterborough and install his own sacristan, treasurer and wardrobe-keeper so he could send to Cluny all that was inside or outside the Abbey:

Crist ræde for þa wrecce muneces of Burch 7 for þet wrecce stede

May Christ provide for the wretched monks of Peterborough

and for that unhappy foundation!

1131 88v/133

There are more strands of sense here than that of 'material poverty', but the plundering of the Abbey and the material impoverishment of the community and their foundation is an important element.

### Spiritual impoverishment

This instance does not have any 'material poverty' context and is a reference to the spiritual poverty of the people at the time when two Popes were chosen after the death of Pope Honorius II:

Nu wærð swa mycel dwyld on Cristendom swa it næfre ær ne wæs.

Crist sette red for his wrecce folc!

Now more heresies were rife in Christendom than ever before.

Christ give counsel to his wretched people.

1129 87v/16

Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **Summary**

The item from the *TOE* 'poverty' category is *ærme* which has connotations of 'material poverty' but also, as in the early annals, strong disapproval when it is applied to the act of giving the abbacy of Peterborough to the pluralist, Henry of Poitu, and to the plight of the people led to a disastrous crusade by Henry of the Temple.

From OE but not in the *TOE* 'poverty' category is *wrecche*. There is no sense 'material poverty' but it is used in that context as it applies to Peterborough after the death of Abbot Leofric who had enriched the abbey more than any other. It is also used of spiritual impoverishment.

## The Second Continuation

These are the annals written by the second scribe and are for the years 1132 to 1154.

They appear to have been written in one block.

## Words from the *TOE* poverty category

*ælmes*

### Material poverty

The antonym here is *rice men* and this seems to be an example of erstwhile rich men reduced to poor men in a reference to 'material poverty':

Sume ieden on ælmes þe wæren

sum wile rice men

Some lived on alms that were once rich men.

1137 90r/135

It is interesting that there is a reference to *carited* 'alms' in the same annal, for 1137, where it was said that Martin, who was Abbot of Peterborough during Stephen's reign:

heold mycel carited in the hus

was liberal in alms-giving

1137 90r/24

but Swanton (1996) notes that *caritas* had the further sense 'monastic allowance or



measure of food and drink' as well as 'commemoration feast' at the anniversaries of benefactors, so the sense 'alms giving' might be misleading here.

Collocation

None

Antonym

1137                      ælmes . . . rice

### **Words from OE but not in the *TOE* poverty category**

*wrecce*

In the Second Continuation *wrecce* or *uurecce* are consistent spellings.

#### Material poverty

There is a passage in the annal dated 1137<sup>19</sup> in which an account is given of the conditions in the country during the lawlessness of the reign of Stephen. As often with words such as *wrecce* there are elements within the context of 'material poverty' but also of oppression, misery and suffering and the translation 'wretched' makes sense in context while maintaining the range of senses that the word contains. Here, however, material deprivation is the foreground in this context and there are certainly instances in which it seems to be the main one of a range of senses.

I ne can ne I ne mai tellen alle þe wunder ne alle þe pines ðat hi  
diden

wrecce men on þis land; 7 ðat lastede þa .xix. wintre wile Stephne

---

<sup>19</sup> But written after Stephen's death in 1154 from the comment 7 ðat lastede þa .xix. wintre wile Stephne was king

was king, 7 æure it was uuerse 7 uuerse.

I do not know nor am I able to tell all the horrors nor all the cruelties that they did to the wretched people in this land. It lasted nineteen years while Stephen was king and it always got worse and worse.

1137 89v/134-5

This comes after a section which describes the cruel tortures that were used and the thousands that were killed through hunger. The use of *wrecce* here is probably referring back primarily to that physical suffering, but in the subsequent section attention turns to the robbery and depredations which were committed both through taxes and levies and through robbery:

Hi læiden gæildes on the tunes æure um wile 7 clepeden it tenserie.

Pa þe uurecce men ne hadden nammore to gyuen, þa ræueden hi 7

brendon alle the tunes, ðat wel þu myhtes faren al a dæis fare, sculdest

thu neure finden man in tune sittende ne land tiled. Pa was corn dære

7 flec 7 cæse 7 butere, for nan ne wæs o þe land.

They levied a tax, known as 'tenserie'<sup>20</sup> upon the villages time and again.

When the poor people had no more to give, they robbed them and burned

all the villages, so that you could easily go a day's journey without ever

finding a village inhabited or land cultivated. Then was corn dear and

flesh and cheese and butter, for there was none in the land.

I suggest that here the focus of the context is 'material impoverishment' and that in this instance the use of *uurecce*, while still containing the elements of misery and

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<sup>20</sup> i.e. 'protection money' Old French *tenser* 'to protect' (Swanton 1996 p 264n).

suffering, has in the foreground the element of being driven into 'material poverty'. It is interesting that if, as above, *uurecce* is translated as 'poor' other elements enter the frame such as those denoting pity, and it is difficult to know whether this would have been present in the word *uurecce* or whether the senses of misery and suffering would have taken its place.

This continues:

Wrecce men sturuen of hungær. Sume ieden on ælmes þe waren  
sum wile rice men, sume flugen ut of lande.

Poor men starved through hunger. Some depended on alms who  
had once been rich men, some fled the land.

It is difficult to pin this passage down, and there are other translations that make equal sense in context but are more general. It is interesting here that the senses of the two antonyms<sup>21</sup> *wrecce* and *rice* are both in a state of shift. Godden (1990) traces the shift in sense of *rice* from OE where the primary sense was that of 'power' through to the ME sense in which the primary sense was that of 'wealthy' and it is possible to read its use in this context in either sense, or indeed in both. Before the wide adoption of *poure*, *wrecce* can be seen occupying the sense 'poor' in manuscripts written about fifty years after this annal even to the extent of providing a gloss for *pauperem*.<sup>22</sup>

The final instance in this passage is a more general reference to the hardship and

<sup>21</sup> I am taking *wrecce* and *rice* here as antonyms but it could be argued that this is more in the nature of a list with three items, rather than the first two being an opposing pair.

<sup>22</sup> In MS Lambeth 487 f. 42b X *De Octo Uiciis & De Duodecim Abusiuis Huius Seculip: Qui suscitāt de puluere egenum. & de stercore erigit pauperem. þet is. God ahef of mexe þene mon þe he wule þau he were er wreche and macað hine to lauerde* That is, God raises from the mire whom he will, though he were erstwhile poor.



misery the country has endured:

Wes næure gæt mare wreccehed on land ne næure hethen men

werse ne diden þan hi diden

Never did a country endure greater wretchedness, and never did

the heathen act more vilely than they did.

Clark (1952-3 p 78) notes that this is the first noted example of the new suffix *-hed* in *wreccehed*.

### Oppression

While there is an element in the context that people were impoverished during the reign of Stephen, because of the constant warfare and lawlessness, the main element in this instance is that of the forced labour in castle building:

Hi suencten suyðe þe uurecce men of þe land mid

castelweorces;

They sorely burdened the unhappy people of the country

with forced labour on the castles<sup>23</sup>

1137 89r/134

Collocation

None

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<sup>23</sup> Swanton (1996 p 264n) notes this is a type of forced labour condemned by Pope Eugenius III writing in 23 July 1147 (*Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, II, p 200).

## Antonym

1137                      wrecce . . . rice

## Summary

From the *TOE* category of poverty is *ælmes* with the sense of 'material poverty' and with the antonym *rice*.

From OE but not included in the *TOE* 'poverty' category is *wrecce* which is used with the element of material poverty and is also used of those who are oppressed.

## General summary

There appear to be no words in the 'poverty' category from either a French or a Scandinavian derivation. This is surprising, but with regard to Scandinavian agrees with Kniezsa's assessment that the frequency of Scandinavian words in all layers of the *Peterborough Chronicle* is sparse (Kniezsa 1994 p 237).

## 4. Some Lexical Replacement

### In Ælfric

#### Introduction

Ælfric's work continued to be copied well into the twelfth century. Indeed, some of his homilies now exist only in a twelfth century copy. Of those edited by Irvine from MS Bodley 343 (homilies I, II, III and IV in Irvine 1993), only Homily III *The Healing of the Blind Man* has content which contains poverty vocabulary, and this vocabulary confirms Irvine's observation that the scribe is remarkably conservative linguistically for the third quarter of the twelfth century (1993: lv). There seem to be none of the equivalent replacement poverty items that are found in contemporary manuscripts and all the items which are used about poverty are those found in the *TOE* poverty category, for example *þearfæn* of Lazarus and *wædliende* of the blind man sitting begging (Irvine 1993: 70/255 and 62/24 respectively). No comparison with earlier copies is possible as these homilies are unique to this manuscript, but it seems likely that little variation in lexical choice might be found if it were.

It is puzzling, therefore, to look at the entries for MS Bodley 343 in Clemoes' edition of the First Series of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*. In Appendix C he details variant readings from late manuscripts which are excluded from the main apparatus because he considers they reflect only the late date of their manuscripts (1997: 543-562). These mainly affect lexis, word order and prefixes (Clemoes 1997: 543). It should be stressed that the data I have collected from this Appendix includes variants only from the poverty category and so may reflect the amount of content which includes poverty, rather than indicate the overall level of variants in a manuscript. Nonetheless it is puzzling, in the light of the lack of apparent lexical replacement in



the poverty category of Irvine's unique Ælfric homilies, to find that in some of the other Ælfric homilies from Series One in MS Bodley 343 there is replacement which is much more in line with twelfth-century practice.

For homily XVIII *In Letania Maiore* Clemoes lists the following variants in MS Bodley 343 (1997: 546-7):

line

- 169      todælde þearfum] delde wrecces
- 174      þearfa] wrecca
- 178      þearfan] wrecce  
            þearfan] wræcce
- 179      þearfan] wrecces
- 190      earm] poure
- 193      þearfan] wreccen
- 204      earman] wrecce
- 205      þearfa] poure
- 206      þearfan] poure  
            þearfa] poure
- 208      earma] wrecce
- 209      þearfa] wrecce
- 210      þearfa] wrecce
- 211      þearfan] wrecce

The section of the homily that is concerned with the poor begins at line 165 and continues to the end of the homily at line 213. Within these forty eight lines there are twenty three items from the poverty category, of which fifteen are replaced and eight are left to stand, so the level of replacement is about two thirds. There is an additional

instance of *neode* which I have not included because it is in the phrase *biddað ure neode* about making known our need to God and so is not in context poverty related.

The poverty items are composed of fifteen instances of *þearf*- of which twelve are replaced and only three stand; six instances of *earm*- of which three are replaced and three stand; one instance of *wædlan* which stands, and one instance of *loddere* which also stands, although it occurs in the phrase *Nis se loddere mid his tættecon min gelica* which has the feel of a formulaic phrase which may make its replacement less likely.

The instances of *þearf*- and *earm*- which are changed are all replaced with *wrecche*- except for four instances, one of *earm* and three of *þearfa*, which are replaced with *poure*. I cannot see any factors in the content or the style which would be an element in which items are replaced and what they are replaced with.

The replacement of *earm* with *poure* in line 190 is in the context that if a rich woman and a poor woman give birth together, it is not possible to tell which is the rich woman's child and which the poor woman's if the women are not present. The use of *poure* here brings to mind the earliest *MED* instance of *poure* which is in *The Trinity Homilies* in Homily VIII, which is not by Ælfric, *In Purificatione S. Marie* where it is used of the rich and poor women's sacrifices in the temple after having given birth. This instance in MS Bodley 343 does not seem to be in the *OED* or the *MED*.

The three replacements by *poure* in lines 205 and 206 are in a section which discusses how the rich and the poor are necessary to each other. In both these lines an instance of *welega/n* is also replaced, each time by *rice*.

In homily XXXIII *Dominica II Post Pentecosten* there are also some replacements, though less numerous and all use *wrecche* where *wædl*- or *þearf*- had been.

The question of lexical change in later copies of Ælfric would be a worthwhile study. Unfortunately there is not space here to examine this more fully, but it is worth

noting that high levels of reworking of Ælfric's material after the Conquest does not necessarily parallel high levels of linguistic reworking, for example a manuscript which shows a high level of remodelling, even to the extent of splitting homilies and interleaving another between the two parts, is MS British Library Cotton Vespasian D. xiv (Handley 1973; Richards 1979; Swan 2000). An examination of the poverty language in this manuscript however, shows a poverty category which is that in the *TOE*.

A work by Ælfric which contains material about both involuntary and voluntary poverty and which exists in several copies from pre Conquest to the twelfth, or possibly beginning of the thirteenth century, is *The Twelve Abuses*. I have chosen to look at this in more detail because the content is relevant to this study, particularly as it contains both voluntary and involuntary poverty and exists in several versions which enables a comparison to be made.

## **The 12 Abuses**

A copy of Ælfric's text *The Twelve Abuses* exists in six manuscripts. The sigla are those from Late OE Ælfric MSS from Clemoes' *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies The First Series*.

C: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303 Ker 57

Probably two main hands of the first half of the twelfth century or the middle of the twelfth century and probably written at Rochester (Treharne 2000). About five sixths of the material is from Ælfric with some notes and glosses of 13th to 14th century.

G: London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D.xiv Ker 209

This is dated to the middle of the twelfth century by both Clemoes and Laing and contains some south-eastern forms. It is likely to have been written in the Canterbury



or Rochester area.

P: Oxford Bodleian Library, Hatton 115 (formerly Junius 23) and Kansas, University Library Y 104 (one leaf).

This is in one hand of the second half of the eleventh century.

P contains 3 units in relation to the quiring:

a 1-9

b 10-13

c 14-19

Unit c is a group of homiletic and instructive items not assigned to any particular occasion, four are Old Testament subjects, all are by Ælfric and they include *De XII Abusivis*.

R: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178 (formerly S.6) and 162 (formerly S.5)

Two hands of the first half of the eleventh century and consists of twenty four homilitic pieces arranged in two series of twelve each, together with some short items. The first series are pieces on general themes and the second is homilies for specific occasions among which is *De XII Abusivis*. This text was glossed by the Worcester 'tremulous' hand in the thirteenth century.

S: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 116 Ker 333

One hand of first half of the twelfth century of a type often found in twelfth century manuscripts from West of England monastic houses. It was glossed by the Worcester 'tremulous' hand in the thirteenth century.

Xi: London, Lambeth Palace 487

This was printed as Morris i-ix and is written in one hand of the end of the twelfth century or beginning of the thirteenth. Sisam (1951) distinguishes two main groups on the basis of orthographical differences in the exemplars which are probably both twelfth century; i-v and x and ix-xiii. subdivided into i-v; ix and xi-xiii with a second group consisting of the rest. She suggests the second group is unlikely to go back to pre-Conquest originals. The first contains *De XII Abusivis*.

Treharne (2000) groups together five manuscripts which are linked by date and by content. Three of these contain *De XII Abusivis*, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library Hatton 116, MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 303 and MS London, British Library Cotton Vespasian D. xiv. Among these five she finds codicological and thematic connections that suggest that they may have been produced for a common purpose. She suggests that they are small, portable and, while well produced, non-elaborate in format (Treharne 2000 p. 39).

This item is a version of what is called in MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv the *De XII abusiuis secundum disputationem Sancti Cipriani martyris* and is by Ælfric although not ascribed to his first or second series of homilies or the Saints' Lives series. The text is concerned with the eight vices: greed; fornication; covetousness; anger; love of the world; sloth; idle boasting; pride. There are eight virtues which can overcome these sins: moderation; chastity; generosity; patience; spiritual bliss; good works; charity; humility. It then goes on to discuss the twelve abuses that are dangerous in the world: the wise without good works; the old without piety; the young without obedience; the rich without charity; women without purity; rulers without strength; the Christian who is quarrelsome; the poor who are proud; the king who is unrighteous; the bishop who is negligent; the people who are without instruction; the people who are lawless. In MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 178 and 303, Oxford, Bodleian Library Hatton 116 and London, Lambeth Palace 487 the piece is copied as one. In Oxford, Bodleian Library Hatton 115 only the *XII Abusiuis* is copied and in London,



British Library Cotton Vespasian D. xiv. the order of the *Abuses* and the *Vices and Virtues* is reversed (Handley 1973). Although the section about the eight vices and their corresponding eight virtues talks about the need for charity, it is in the section on the twelve abuses that there is much more detailed discussion about poverty, humility and riches. There is also an explanation of the difference between voluntary and involuntary poverty, and how it could be possible for a rich man to be one of 'God's poor' where a poor man might not be. I shall concentrate the analysis on this section.

### **A comparison between three texts**

The text of *XII Abusiuis* used by the corpus of *The Dictionary of Old English* in Toronto is the text of MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 178, dated to the first half of the eleventh century (Clemoes 1997 p. 37).<sup>24</sup> I shall compare this with the text in MS London, British Library Cotton Vespasian D. xiv,<sup>25</sup> which is dated by Laing (1993) to the mid twelfth century, and placed in the South East, either Rochester or Christ Church, Canterbury; and with the text in London, Lambeth 487,<sup>26</sup> which is dated by Clemoes to the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century and for which Laing, citing Samuels, places the language on the border of North Hereford and Salop.<sup>27</sup> These manuscripts therefore cover a spread of possibly a hundred and fifty years. It should be borne in mind that the two post conquest manuscripts are written in different parts of the country - Lambeth 487 probably in the West Midlands and Vespasian D. xiv probably in the South East - and this brings the inevitable difficulty of the many influences on scribes and their texts, here that of differing dialect influences as well as time, which make direct comparisons between texts complex. The focus for comparison is on the passages that have lexical content that is to do with 'poverty'.

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<sup>24</sup> Printed in EETS reprint (1998) of Morris's edition in EETS os 29, 34 pp 296-304

<sup>25</sup> From Warner (1917) EETS os 152

<sup>26</sup> From Morris's edition in EETS os 29, 34 pp 101-119

<sup>27</sup> Referred to as CCCC 178, V D. xiv and L 487.



There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.
6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

I shall use the reference numbers given through the text in the corpus of the *Dictionary of Old English at Toronto* as the three textual variants follow so closely that all the texts can be broken down into the same sections.

When lines are directly compared, the first line is from CCCC178 and is in plain type; the second line is from Vespasian D. xiv and is in italic; the third line is from Lambeth 487 and is in plain type prefixed with \*. I have placed the reference numbers to the left so that the three lines can be easily compared.

## Words for 'the poor'

The texts are so similar that individual words can be directly compared.

ref.	CCCC 178	V. D. xiv	L. 487
106	þearfa	þearfe	wrecche
158	hafenleasan	hafeleasen	hauelese
192	wædla	wædle	wreche
211	þearfa	þearefe	wrecche
212	earm	earm	erm
	ymðe	ermðe	ermð
215	þearfum	þearfen	wreccan
	þearfan	þearfen	wrecchan
	þearfan	þearfen	wrecchen
218	þearfan	þearfe	wrecchan
	hafenleast	hafonleaste	haueleste
221	þearfum	þearfen	wrecchan
	wædla	wædle	þarua
	þearfa	þearfe	wrecche
225	þearfa	þearfe	wreccha
	þearfa	þearefe	wrecche
235	earmne	earmne	ermne
241	þearfan	þearfe	wrecchan

## Latin translations

There are Latin phrases and sentences throughout the texts that are then explained in English. Some of these include 'poverty' words and the translation choices are as follows:

ref. 192:

here L 487 inserts Latin which is not present in the other two texts, although the OE is present, and translates it as follows:

*Qui suscitāt de puluere egenum. & de stercore erigit pauperum.* þet is

God ahef of mexe þene mon þe he wule þau he were er wreche

that is, God raises from the mire whom he will though he were poor before  
and makes him a lord

here both *egenum* and *pauperum* are covered by *wreche*.

ref. 215:

all three texts have the same Latin which in L 487 translates as follows:

*Beati pauperes spiritu quoniam ipsorum est regnum celorum*

þet is eadize beoð þa wrecchan þe on gaste beoð wrecchan.

heore is heouenriche murhðe

Blessed are the poor who are poor in spirit for theirs is the joy of the  
kingdom of heaven

here *pauperes* is translated as *wrecchan* where the other two texts use *þearfan*.



ref. 221:

this is an interesting section which is discussed more fully below. There is a section in Latin which is King David's description of himself translated as follows:

CCCC 178      *Ego uero egenus et pauper sum*

Ic eom wædla & þearfa

V D. xiv      *Ego uero egenus et pauper sum*

Ic eam wædle 7 þearfe

L 487      *Ego egenus & pauper sum*

Ic em þarua and wrecche

This is a section in which L 487, which elsewhere translates both *wædla* and *þearfa* into *wrecche*, has to find two words for 'poor' for the same sentence because the Latin sentence uses two different words. This is the only instance in this section in which two different Latin words for 'poor' need to be represented in OE in two places.<sup>28</sup> In OE the two words *wædla* and *þearfa* were a common pair, but no equivalent pair seems to emerge in eME. This is the latest citation in the MED sense for 'tharf' adj. '(a) In need, indigent, poor; also, meek, humble; ~ on gost.'<sup>29</sup> Had the variant been based on *wædla* there would have been a w- and w- pair, and forms based on *wædla* are used in the west Midlands just after this period by Lazamon and in the east by Orm. On the other hand the choice of *þarua* maintains the w and þ pair of the other two texts. If this were a factor in the choice, however, it is interesting that the

<sup>28</sup> In the gloss for ref. 192 above L 487 conflates the two Latin words into one OE phrase.

<sup>29</sup> For sense (b) as noun: 'one who is needy, a poor person; *coll.* the poor, the needy; also, one who is meek, a humble person; *coll.* the humble' the latest citations are dated as 1225 (as L 487 is also in the MED) and are from *Vices and Virtues* (*Stw* 34) and *Wor. Ælfric Gloss* (*Wor F.174*)

pair appear in a different order.

Consistently through the rest of the text L 487 replaces both *þearfa* and *wædla* with *wrecche*. The only occasions overall on which L 487 uses a word except *wrecche* are twice when all three texts use *hafenleas-*; once when all three texts use *earmne*; and once when L 487 uses *þarua* (above). I will look at these exceptions in more detail below. It seems surprising that at a time when it is commonly supposed that Late West Saxon has loosened much of its hold, that a text such as L 487 has moved in this section to a smaller lexical range than had been the case in earlier copies of the same text.<sup>30</sup>

### *hafenleas-*

There are two instances of *hafenleas-*, one in ref. 158 and one in ref. 218. The first instance is:

ref. 158	Ne licge on þinum horde þæt þam hafenleasan mæge fremian to bigwiste forþam <i>Ne licge on þine horde, þ. þan hafeleasen mæig freomigen to bigwisten, for þan</i> *Ne ligge nefre on þine heorde. þet haelese monnam meie fremian.  þe þu ne brycst ana þinra welena þeah þu wolice healde <i>þe þu ne brucst ane þinre welena þeh þu heo wolice healde.</i> *for þu ane ne brukest naut þinra welena. þah þu hi demliche halde.
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<sup>30</sup> This is, however, a very small sample and it would be interesting to compare more widely.

Do not lay up in hoard what may be of help to the destitute, for you  
do not enjoy your wealth that you hoard secretly.

This seems a straightforward instance of purely material deprivation and it is not clear whether *wædle* or *wrecche* would have changed the sense at all. These are the only two instances of *hafeleasen* in this section for all three texts, so were a distinct choice, which has been followed by these later scribes. In the following instance, however, the use of *hafenleast* seems more specific. This is in the context of a discussion about the relative natures of voluntary and involuntary poverty:

ref. 218	<p>þa beoð þearfan on gaste þa þe for Godes lufan beoð eadmode forþam þe þæs</p> <p><i>þa byð þearfe on gaste. þa þa for Godes lufe byð eadmode, for þan þe þæs</i></p> <p>*Ða beoð wrecchan on gaste þe for godes luue beoð milde and admode. for þon þe þes</p> <p>They are poor in spirit who for God's love are humble for</p> <p>modes eadmodnyss mæg begitan Godes rice hroðor þonne seo hafenleast</p> <p><i>modes eadmodnysse mæg begyten Godes rice, raðer þone se hafonleaste</i></p> <p>*modes edmodnesse mei biȝetan godes riche reðer þen þe haueleste</p> <p>humbleness of mind may obtain God's kingdom sooner than the poverty</p>
----------	--



þe of hynþum becymð

*þe of henðe becumð.*

\*þe of henðe cumeð.

that comes from misfortune.

Here *hafenleast* carries the explicit sense of earthly poverty and has no spiritual connotations and gains no spiritual reward. It is in contrast with the state of being *þearfan/wrecche on gaste*. It seems to be a narrow reference to being 'without goods' and this is made clearer by the lexical choice.

In the *TOE* category the words connected to *hafen/hafol* do not carry any **p** flags and this restriction to a concrete sense may have been of long standing. There is a parallel use in the Interpolation in the *Peterborough Chronicle* for 675 in which the word is used of those who are too poor to be able to travel on pilgrimage to Rome. This is a translation from Latin of a Bull of Pope Agatho which may have influenced its lexical choice, but here too the word has the clear sense 'material poverty'.

### *earmne*

There are two instances of *earm-* and one of *ymðe*.

In ref. 235 there is a discussion of the attributes of a righteous king. As often occurs in such discussion, the virtue of provision made by the king for the whole range of his subjects, rather than just the powerful or rich, is mentioned:

ref. 235	þæt is cyninges rihtwisnyss þæt he mid riccetere ne ofsitte ne earmne ne eadigne  <i>þ. is cynges rihtwisnyss þ. he mid riccetre ne ofsitte, ne earmne ne eadigne</i>  *Ðet is kinges rihtwisnesse þet he mid wohze ne of-sitte ne ermne
----------	---

ne eadne.

That is the king's righteousness that he oppress not wrongfully the poor nor rich.<sup>31</sup>

This has a wider possible range than simply 'rich' and 'poor', since *eadi-* has the sense 'rich', but also 'prosperous' and 'happy'<sup>32</sup> which it carries through into ME and as a balance against this positive end of the continuum there are corresponding negative senses in *erm* which also has wider connotations.<sup>33</sup> In OE *wædle* and *pearf* do not carry this range of overtones.<sup>34</sup> There is also a balance here between the initial sound *ea-* in both words so there may be an additional stylistic reason for following the lexical choice.

Earlier, in ref. 212, there is another use of *earme* which is also followed by the later texts:

ref. 212 Menig mann næfð æhta & hæfð modignysse swa þeah & is earm for worulde

*Manig mann næfeð æhte, 7 hæfeð modignysse swa þeh, 7 is earm for wurlde*

\*Moni mon nafð ehta. and þeh haueð modinesse and is erm for worlde.

Many a man has no possessions and yet has pride and is poor before the world

& ungesælig for Gode þonne he arærð his mode mid modignysse ongean God

*7 ungesælig for God, þonne he arærð his mod mid modignysse ongean Gode,*

\*and unseli for gode. þenne he arereð his mod mid modinesse onzein god.

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<sup>31</sup> Translation from Morris EETS os 29, 34 p. 114

<sup>32</sup> Clark Hall (1960).

<sup>33</sup> Clark Hall (1960) 'poor, wretched, miserable, destitute'.

<sup>34</sup> Clark Hall (1960) *wædle*: 'poor, destitute'. *Pearfa*: 'destitute, poor, needy.'

and wicked<sup>35</sup> before God, when he raises his spirit with pride against God

& nele on his yrmðe eadmodnysse healdan

7 nele on his ermðe eadmodnysse healden

\* and nule on his ermðe edmodnesse halden

and will not hold humility in his poverty

Here it is explicit that the man *næfeð æhte* and so is in 'material poverty' but as discussed, *earm* carries other senses of 'wretched' and 'miserable' which *hafenleas-* did not in its use above and there is a negative emotional colour here which was not present in ref. 158, when the 'poor' were those who needed help, or even in ref. 218 where the state of involuntary poverty brought no spiritual virtue but was described by the neutral use of *hafenleas-* and where no negative overtones of *modignysse* were applied. The distinction here is that he is not in the spiritual state of 'poverty' which embraces humility but is in addition *modig*. The world sees him as *earm* and before God he is *ungesælig*. In *The Twelve Abuses* both *pearfa* and *wædla*, and in L 487 *wrecche*, are used of the poverty that has a spiritual dimension and as with the use of *hafenleas-* which emphasised the earthly nature of poverty, it may be that the choice of *earm* and *ymðe* here removes any possible ambiguity.

#### ref. 215 - 225

This passage is in full in the Appendix.

The first section ref. 215 is an exposition of the First Beatitude (Matthew 5:3) about those who are poor in spirit. In this CCCC 178 and Vespasian D. xiv use *pearf-* and L 487 uses *wrecche*, this translates *pauper* and the English in L 487 is:

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<sup>35</sup> **TOE 12.08.06.02.03: (Of persons) wicked, evil-doing: unsælig**



þet is eadige beoð þa wrecchan þe on gaste  
 beoð wrecchan. heore is heouenriche murhðe.  
 blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the joy of heaven

Here *wrecche* is used in the sense 'voluntary poverty' in addition to its use otherwise in 'material poverty' as *þearf-* was. In the next section, ref. 218, the difference between voluntary and involuntary poverty is discussed - and in L 487 the voluntary poverty, *wrecche*, is contrasted with involuntary poverty that reaps no spiritual benefit and that comes from misfortune, which is purely worldly poverty and which in all three texts is named as *hafenleast*.<sup>36</sup>

Section ref. 221 describes how the rich who live in righteousness may be counted as among God's poor if they show humility, as King David did when he said of himself *Ego uero egenus 7 pauper sum*<sup>37</sup> and again CCCC 178 and Vespasian D. xiv use the familiar pair *wædla* and *þearfa* whereas L 487 uses *þarua* and *wrecche*.

The last section in this passage, ref. 225 considers the opposing states, in which the materially poor are counted as among the rich if they are proud, and the materially rich are counted as among the poor if they are humble. The opposites are *þearfa/rican* and *rica/þearfa* in CCCC 178; *þearfe/ricen* and *rice/þearefe* in Vespasian D. xiv; *wreccha/richan* and *riche/wrecche* in L 487.

Although it is possible that *rica* could contain elements of 'powerful' and its poverty antonyms contain elements of 'powerless', the foreground in this passage is about worldly goods, as is clear from the use of *næfð æhta* in ref. 212 and *hafenleas-* in ref. 158 and ref. 218. It seems that *wrecche* is well established as a central item in the 'poverty' vocabulary of L 487 translating *wædla*, *þearfa* and from Latin *pauper* and *egenus*.

<sup>36</sup> Vespasian D. xiv has *hafonleaste* and L 487 *haueleste*

<sup>37</sup> L 487 misses out *uero*

## **The *Poema Morale***

### **Introduction**

The *Poema Morale* exists in seven versions which, with their sigla, are:

1. T - Cambridge, Trinity College MS 335 (B.14.52) ff. 2r-9v
2. L - London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 487 ff. 59v-65r
3. e - London, British Library MS Egerton 613 ff. 64r-70v
4. E - London, British Library MS Egerton 613 ff. 7r-12v (in another hand to e and written about 1250)
5. D - Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 4, ff. 97r-110v.
6. J - Oxford, Jesus College MS 29 ff. 169r-174v.
7. M - Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS McClean 123 fff. 115r-120r.

The author opens by lamenting his years and his mis-spent life and the poem exhorts the reader to to live a good life. The title does not exist in any of the six manuscripts, and Hill puts forward the alternative title *Conduct of Life* (1976). A source for the *Poema Morale* has not been identified although Hill draws parallels in the subject matter and its treatment with other literature of the time, both in English and in Anglo Norman texts. There is a long history of scholarship to unravel the relationships between the extant copies which is detailed in Hill (1976 p. 99-100). She states that the important point is that it is agreed that the two Egerton versions, which are in the same manuscript, but one of which is later than the other, are closely related and derive from an exemplar which they do not share with any other copy (Hill 1976 p. 100).

I have chosen to study these texts in more detail because they have content about poverty and they are sufficiently similar to enable a close comparison between their poverty vocabulary to be made.



## **A comparison between three texts**

Each version in MS Trinity MS 335 (B.14.52) (T) , MS Lambeth 487 (L) and MS Jesus 29 (J) is in one hand throughout. T. (with E.) is the longest of the versions with 398 lines. J. has 388 lines and particularly adds single lines. L. is written as prose but when reconstructed has 267 lines. Hill (1976 p. 115) considers T. the earliest example of a South-East Midland rhymed text composed during the Middle English period and the first English verse text that can be assigned to the London area.

The earliest of these manuscripts is T dated by Laing to the second half of the twelfth century. L is dated to the end of the twelfth century or beginning of the thirteenth and J. to the last quarter of the thirteenth century.

## **The vocabulary of poverty**

Manuscript citations are in chronological order. I have identified the poverty words in accordance with six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on



the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.

6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

Where parallel citations are made between all three texts I have kept the reference to the left for ease of comparison.

### **erm**

There is one instance of this, present in all three manuscripts. It is expressing the base nature of earthly authority compared to God's and this echoes the use of *earm* to describe the body and the mortal life as opposed to the spiritual life of heaven.

#### With the sense 'earthly/bodily'

T. 323            Ȝief we serueden god half þat we doð for erminges

L. 319            if we serueden god. so we doð erninges

J. 317            Yef we seruede god. so we doþ earmynges.

We mihte habbe more of heouene. þan eorles oþer kynges.

If we served God as we do wretches (ie. earthly rulers) we might  
have more of heaven than earls or kings

Hall points up the sense of the earthly, *erminges* 'miserable mortals' (note 319 p 350).

### **wane/wone**

This occurs towards the end of the poem in the context of the nature of paradise.

### Want/lack

As is found elsewhere, including in OE, for example in the prose *Phoenix*, paradise is characterised by its lack of earthly distresses, here there is no 'want' *wane* in T. and L. *wone* in J. and those who dwell about God lack nothing that is good, 'lack' also as *wane* in T. and L. *wone* in J.

### **poure**

J. is the only version of these three that uses *poure*. This is interesting as, except in surnames, it is the manuscript that contains T. which has the earliest extant record of *poure*, where it is used in Homily VIII *In Purificatione S. Marie* (Morris 1873 repr. 1998 47/18) in *MED* sense 1. (a) 'Lacking money or material possessions, destitute; needy, indigent; also, less wealthy in comparison with somebody else' where it contrasts the rich and the poor women's sacrifices in the temple. However, the T. version of *Poema Morale* is in Ker's Hand A whereas T's Homily VIII is in Ker's Hand B (Laing 1993 p. 38) so having different scribes may be a factor.

J. uses *poure* in three instances, two of which are in additions so the text is not present in the other two manuscripts.

### Material poverty

The first addition changes the sense of the other two versions in which T. and L. say that he who has more and he who has less may both alike purchase the kingdom of heaven. In J. this becones:

J. 60/66           Pe riche and þe poure boþe. ah nouht alle ilyche.  
                      Pe poure myd his penye. Pe riche myd his punde.  
                      The rich and the poor both are not all alike

the poor with his penny, the rich with his pound.

The other instance in which J. uses *poure* in an addition is in the context of those who go to hell, including those who would not give of their own wealth when they saw it was needed. T. and L. then go on to those who would not hear God's message, but J. first adds a line about the failure to help *poure* kinsmen:

J 67/257            Peo þat almes nolde yeue þere he iseyh þe neode  
                         Ne his poure kunesmen. at him ne myhte nouht spede

Presumably this was not in the exemplar and so *poure* might have been used as a freer lexical choice. In both these instances *poure* is used with a primary component of material poverty. The last instance is not in an addition but is a substitution of *poure* for *wrecche* in the context still of those who are in hell. Here material poverty could be an element but in the versions which use *wrecche* overtones of lowliness and misery are also present.

T. 227/254        [P] ar inne beð þe was to lef wreche men to swenche.  
L. 175/250        Per inne boð þa þe was to lof wreche men to swenchen  
J 66/246           Par-inne beop þeo. þat her wes leof. poure men to swenche.  
                         Therein shall be those who delighted to persecute poor men

This is an interesting emendation by the J. scribe. That *poure* is used by this scribe is not surprising as the whole Middle English section of the J. manuscript is in this one hand, and this scribe uses *poure* in other texts within the manuscript. It is, however, not clear why *wrecche men* should have been amended here when in all the other instances of *wrecche* the J. scribe follows the exemplar. It is the case that



*wrecche* is used of the damned in hell, and here it is also used of those whom they have wronged to get there, which could lead to ambiguity, but this occurs in other places in the same text where it is not amended by the J. scribe.

The other interesting thing about J.'s substitution here is that it occurs in a version that is, despite additions and updating of orthography, close to T. and L. Presumably the scribe here felt that *poure* was a good near synonym for the use of *wrecche* in this instance, which strengthens the argument that *wrecche* was used for 'materially poor' even though it carries polysemous meanings to do with misery and baseness as well, which *poure* does not seem to at this period, as defined in the *MED* and *OED*.

### **wrecche**

In addition to the instance of *wrecche* amended by the J. scribe above, there are four occurrences that are common to all three manuscripts plus one which is found only in L.

#### With the sense 'oppressed'

The first instance is similar to that above in which J. substituted *poure*. In the context of those who are suffering in hell, again hell is for those who treat *wrecche* men cruelly:

L. 170	Pa þe uuele holden wreche men
T. 171	Po þe euel hielden wreche men
J 171	Deo þat vuele heolde wrecche men.

#### With the sense 'earthly/bodily'

There is the use of *wrecche* to signify things of the earth as opposed to the spiritual things of heaven:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| L. 179/334 | wid þes wrecched worldes luue. þat he ne mawe us derien       |
| T. 230/338 | [W]ið þesses wreches woredes luue þat hit ne muʒe us derien   |
| J 69/331   | Wip þeos wrecche worldes luue. þe heo vs ne derye             |
|            | (let us shield ourselves) against this wretched world's love, |
|            | that it may not hurt us                                       |

With the sense 'the damned'

*Wrecche* is used of the people who are cruelly used on earth, and whose treatment merits damnation in hell for their oppressors. It is also used of the souls damned in hell, the oppressors. This is a situation in which the polysemy of *wrecche* gives rise to a situation in which it is used of two opposing groups. Those who have sinned through sight are condemned to see hell's monsters:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| L. 177/282 | þos sculle þa wrecchen i-son. þe sunege þurð sihte          |
| T. 228/286 | Po sulle þe wreche sowle isien þe sinegeden þurh sihte.     |
| J 68/280   | Per schule þe wrecche soulen iseon. Þat sunegeden bi sihtes |
|            | These shall the wretched see that sinned through sight      |

These uses, of the oppressed and the oppressors in hell, fit senses 2. and 3. from the *OED* definitions:

2. One who is sunk in deep distress, sorrow, misfortune, or poverty; a miserable, unhappy, or unfortunate person; a poor or hapless being.

The earliest citation is about 1000 in *The Metres of Boethius*.

Of an adjective: 3. Despicable, vile, reprehensible.

The earliest citation is about 1200 in *Vices and Virtues* and, of the equivalent sense for

the noun, the *OED* notes that this sense is in very frequent use from about 1300 onwards.

With the sense 'miser'

- L. 259            þe wreche mon binom his ehte. *and* leide his on horde.  
T. 263            Pe wreche men binomen here aihte *and* leide his on horde.  
J. 255            Peo þat wrecche men bynmeþ. his eyhte. and hit leyþ an horde  
                    who took his property from the wretched man and laid it in  
                    his hoard

This corresponds to the *OED* sense 4. A niggardly or parsimonious person; a miser, though the first citation is 1303 Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*. I wonder whether the sense in J. may be subtly different, where it might be 'those who took away the wealth from poor men and laid it up in hoard'.

In L. alone:

In the section about the people in hell, L. has:

- L. 173/231        Per is waning and wow. efter eche streche  
                    he fareð from hete to hete. *and* hech to frure þe wreche  
                    There is whining and woe after each stretch (torment)  
                    They go from heat to cold and nearly freeze the wretches  
                    (Morris' translation.)

where both T. and J. both have simply 'from heat to cold and from cold to heat' (T.



236; J. 228) as they end their previous line with *strate* and *strete* respectively and so the rhyme with 'heat' is intact.

### To signify 'everyone'

There are two instances in which the range of people is described. The first is:

T. 164	heie and lo3e
L. 162	riche and la3e
J. 168	riche and lowe

and the second:

T. 231	eadi men and arme
L. 226	edi men and arme
J. 223	edye men and arme

Both are a common phrase for 'everyone' and Hall notes of the second that this pair occurs in the Proverbs of Alfred, and occurs in the same MS (Hall 1920: 343 n 227).

### **Summary**

There is no close collocation in the poverty vocabulary in the *Poema Morale* possibly because the rhyming metre does not encourage elaboration through the use of close synonyms. There is antonym twice when the pair *heie* and *lo3e* and the pair *riche* and *la3e/lowe* are used to denote 'everyone'. The pairs *eadi/edi/eadi* and *arme* are used in the same sense.

*Erm* is used as *erminges* where it has the context of 'earthly' and is applied to serving earthly as opposed to heavenly authority.

*Wrecche* is also used with the sense of 'earthly' in *wrecche* world. The other instances of *wrecche* denote the oppressed as well as those who are in hell because they have oppressed others, and 'miser'.

*Poure* is used only in J., once in an expansion that alters the sense, once in an addition that extends the lack of almsgiving to those in need so that it includes poor kinsmen as well, and once as a substitute where T. and L. have *wrecche* where it is used of the oppressed.

*Wane/wone* is used to express that there is no 'want' in Paradise, and 'lack' in that that those who dwell with God lack for nothing good.

## 6. The *Ormulum*

### Introduction

I have chosen to examine the *Ormulum* because it is not a reworking of earlier texts and is considered to be the manuscript of the author which means the complication of scribal input are lessened. However the choice of words still has constraints such as verse and style, and source texts.

The *Ormulum* is contained in Oxford Bodleian Library MS Junius I. This is the sole surviving copy and has generally been considered to be the author's holograph, and perhaps the product of his various drafts and revisions and the subject of a long period of work rather than a copy done over a relatively short period of time. The edition I have used is White's edition of *The Ormulum* (1878). The references contain the volume, page number and line number. When I refer to the 'glossary definition' of a word then I am referring to the glossary compiled by White for this edition. This is the only complete modern edition currently available.<sup>38</sup>

The work is a collection of homilies written in the East Midlands, and Parkes considers a likely origin to be in the Arroasian Abbey at Bourne in Lincolnshire, and the date to be early in the last quarter of the twelfth century (Parkes 1983:126). In the MED the date is given as ?1200.<sup>39</sup> The author refers to himself as Orm, and identifies himself as an Augustine canon. He says the work was instigated by his brother, Walter. Holt's edition is over twenty thousand lines long but the manuscript is

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<sup>38</sup> Although Nils-Lennart Johannesson, Professor in the department of English at Stockholm University, is heading The Ormulum Project (at [www.english.su.se/nlj/ormpro/ormulum.htm](http://www.english.su.se/nlj/ormpro/ormulum.htm)) which aims to produce a machine readable edition and to investigate the language

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of the history and factors in the dating of the Ormulum see Parkes (Parkes in Stanley and Gray 1983 115-127)



incomplete and the index in the manuscript suggests a much longer work.<sup>40</sup>

The homilies are based on Gospel pericopes from the Missal arranged in an order based on the life of Christ. They are written in a metrical form with a strong stress rhythm and they appear to have been intended to be read aloud to a general lay congregation. It may be that the careful spelling system and the stressed metre was to aid the reading by clerics who were less secure with reading aloud than they might have been. If the manuscript is the author's holograph then there is no complication with later scribal changes by others, through either intention or mistake,<sup>41</sup> and if the content is intended to be understood by a general lay audience then it is tempting to assume that the language could reflect the lexis familiar in the local spoken language.

Parkes considers that the *Ormulum* provides one of the closest parallels to the scribal practices of the continuations of the Peterborough Chronicle among surviving manuscripts of English texts (Parkes 1983: 127). Orm is particularly interesting in the study of early Middle English because of his individual spelling system, for example he doubles the consonant after a short vowel such as in *afterr* or *purrrh*, and the manuscript shows the first surviving written evidence of the borrowing of the Scandinavian third-person plural pronoun (Milroy 1992: 176).

While the majority of items below are from OE, the Scandinavian influence in the lexis appears in the 'poverty' category and Burnley (in Blake 1992 p. 419) suggests that even though the *Ormulum* was written in an area of heavy Scandinavian influence, it may contain no more than 120 Scandinavian loans in 20,000 lines of text, Townend (2002) however suggests there are over two hundred Norse loan words, some of which are unique in showing late Norse sound changes, such as *usell* (see the section on individual words). There are no items in that category from Old French and Bennett and Gray (1986 p. 33) call it 'a homely language, free from French

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<sup>40</sup> Bennett and Gray (1986) suggest only about a fifth survives.

<sup>41</sup> for example as in Lazamon's *Brut* where the scribe of MS Otho appears to have misunderstood *weaðlen* and put *wel-donde* instead at line 2929.

influences'.

## **The 'poverty' category**

There are eighteen items, identified by my criteria, in the category 'poverty' in the *Ormulum*, six are from the *TOE* 'poverty' category; eight are from OE but are not in the *TOE* 'poverty' category; four are from Old Norse. There are none from Old French.

There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.
6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

### Words from the *TOE* category

<b>allmess</b> (7)	<b>nakedd</b> (1)	<b>narrwe</b> (3)	<b>ned</b> (149)
<b>þarrf</b> (8)	<b>wædle</b> (5)		

The high total for *ned* reflects its frequent use in phrases, only four instances are concerned with poverty.

### Words from OE but not in the *TOE* category

<b>litell</b> (50)	<b>nipprenn</b> (14)	<b>unnorne</b> (13)
<b>unntrummnesse</b> (6)	<b>unnwurrþ</b> (1)	<b>wake</b> (8)
<b>wannsenn</b> (8)	<b>wrecche</b> (20)	

The high total for *litell* is a reflection of its literal use in addition to its figurative use.

### Words from ON

<b>lah</b> (30)	<b>meoc</b> (55)	<b>usell</b> (8)	<b>wanntsumm</b> (1)
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The high total for *lah* is a reflection of its literal use in addition to its figurative use.

The high total for *meoc* is because it is a frequent adjective for holy figures and a frequent element in the passages concerned with the ideal Christian life.

### Words from OFr

None.



## Words from the TOE category

### **allmess**

The glossary definition is 'alms' with 'charitable' for *allmessfull*. There are six instances of *allmess* plus one instance of *allmessfull* (i. 346/9931). These do not refer to the poor, the recipients of the alms but to the act itself. All the instances are in the context of material poverty. Four are in the phrase *allmess dedes* (i. 255/7372; i. 347/9968; i. 353/10123; ii. 235/16931), one *allmess werkes* (i. 353/10118.) and one stands alone (i. 255/7369).

### Material poverty

From extra-linguistic knowledge it is clear that as *allmess* refers to the charitable act of giving to the poor all six instances are in the context of the relief of material poverty, but it is the act of giving and not the people who receive it that is the focus here. The relief of material poverty is an act which gains the giver spiritual credit and mitigates sin. Only one reference includes the recipients:

Pin allmess dede onn alle þa

Þatt hafenn ned of hellpe

i. 255/7372

but this is a general reference and the focus in context remains not the recipient of the act but the ability of the act to save the giver.

### Collocation

i. 255/7365      allmess dede

i. 255/7372      allmess dede. . .hafenn ned of hellpe

i. 347/9968      allmess dede

- i. 353/10118      allmess werkes
- i. 353/10123      allmess dedes
- ii. 235/16931     allmess dedess

Antonym

None.

### **nakedd**

The glossary definition is 'naked'. There is only one instance of *nakedd* in the Ormulum.

### Material poverty

This one instance is in the context of alms:

te birrþ clapenn nakedd mann

i. 213/61647

Clothing the poor is one of the acts of charity that bring spiritual salvation. Here feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, helping the sick, housing those who are homeless, and freeing the imprisoned are listed in addition to clothing the naked.<sup>42</sup>

### Collocation

- i. 213/6162-8      hunngriȝ . . . þrissti . . . nakedd . . . sec

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<sup>42</sup> It is interesting that in other texts, for example Lazamon's Brut, the adjective applied to imprisonment, listed in this passage, often comes from the Old English poverty category. See the section on the Brut.

. . . herrberr3helæs. . . bandess

Antonym

None.

**narrwe**

The glossary definition is 'narrow'. There are three instances of *narrwe*.

Material poverty

There is a reference to the crib that Christ is laid in at the Nativity but which is spelt *naru* in this instance.

Þatt illke child, tatt tær wass le33d

Inn an full naru cribbe,

Forr þatt he wolde 3ifenn uss

All heoffness rume richei.

127/3686

I have included this in the context of material poverty because of the widespread emphasis on the poverty of Christ at his birth during this period. This image of the *naru cribbe* is widely used as a reference to Christ's homelessness, echoing his embodiment in the homeless in need of alms, as well as in a contrast to the *heoffness rume riche* which is Christ's true dwelling place. The image of Christ confined on earth is much used in AW where the anchoresses' confinement is a mirror of Christ's.



### Metaphoric or figurative use of the literal sense

Two instances are used figuratively to describe as narrow the path that leads to God (i. 215/6208; i. 321/9202).

#### Collocation

- i. 127/3687/9      naru cribbe
- i. 215/6208        narrwe stih
- i. 321/9202        narrwe stizhess

#### Antonym

- i. 127/3687/9      naru . . . . rume

### **ned**

The glossary definition is 'need, necessity, occasion, infirmity'. I found one hundred and forty nine instances of this and its cognates. This number of instances is partly because it is a word used for 'need' in general as well as 'necessity' so that the context is given by the thing that is needed, which may be spiritual help for example and so not in the context of poverty. There are also many instances because it occurs very frequently in formulaic phrases such as 'for our soul's need' or 'for mankind's need' when referring to the elements in the story of Christ's made man and his life and crucifixion.

### Need, necessity

The uses of *ned* in the Ormulum are of a generalised nature, such as 'need, necessity, occasion' as in White's glossary. The sense 'necessity' does not seem to be a PDE sense and reflects the use of *nede* with a component of constraint as in 'it is necessary to'. There are repeated phrases using *forr ure/pine nede*; *forr alle folke nede*; *forr all*

*mankinne nede* which refer to elements of the Christian story such as Christ made man, Christ crucified which were for man's benefit:

Pær Crist wass uppo rodetreo

Na33ledd forr ure nede

i. 45/1369

There is also the phrase *off ure/3ure sawle nede* used in a parallel sense. There are, however, some instances which are used in the context of material poverty and the poor.

#### Material poverty

There are four instances which refer to the needs of the poor who receive alms. There are no instances of any cognate of *ned/e* being used of 'the poor' as a noun. All four instances use the sense 'to need help':

Patt nedenn to þin hellpe

i. 213/6161

followed by a list of feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, aiding the sick, housing the homeless, freeing the prisoner. Alms deeds are:

Pin allmess dede onn alle þa

Patt hafenn ned of hellpe

i. 255/7372

When the Publicans ask St John what they can do to make amends for their sins they are told:

7 hellpenn a þe wake leod

Att alle kinne nede

i. 354/ 10161

It is through using material wealth for those in need that heavenly bliss can be won:

To nittenn itt att nede

Onn alle þa þatt haffdenn ned

7 þarrfe to þin hellpe,

Pa mihhtesst tu swa þurh þin hord

Pe winnenn heoffness blisse.

ii. 71/12245

#### Collocation

- |                |                                   |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| i. 213/6161    | nedenn . . . hellpe               |
| i. 255/7372-3  | allmess . . . ned . . . hellpe    |
| i. 354/ 10161  | hellpenn . . .wake leod . . .nede |
| ii. 71/12246-7 | ned . . .þarrfe . . .hellpe       |

#### Antonym

None



## **þarrf**

The glossary definition is 'need, occasion' which reflects the component of constraint that was present in its senses of it being 'necessary to' which it shared with *nede*.

There are eight instances of *þarrf* and its cognates in the Ormulum.

### Material poverty

There are two instances that are in the context of the materially poor, those who receive alms. The poor are described as:

alle þa þat hæfdenn ned

7 þarrfe to þin hellpe

ii. 71/12246-7

where the poor are in need and need help. Those who are giving alms should not give beyond what they require for their own needs lest they themselves become in need *Ne mihht te self nohht þarrnenn* (i. 353/10142).

The poverty of Christ on earth is a frequent focus in the Ormulum and much of the poverty vocabulary is used of Christ. Associated with his poverty is his humble earthly status and in the passage about Christ's cleansing of the temple, when he had not yet declared himself the son of God, he is described as:

7 Crist wass þær all unncup 3et

7 unnwurrþ, 7 unnorne

Swa þatt nan mann ne þurrfte off himm,

Ne nimenn gom, ne rekkenn

ii. 208/16162

here Christ's poor and humble status means that no one takes any heed or reckoning of him.

#### To lack, need

There is one instance of 'to need or lack' and the need or lack is not necessarily of material things, but can be of those spiritual things that we need to keep on the righteous path *Patt ure nan ne þurrfe Ut off þe rihhte wezze gan* (i. 269/7765).

#### To be needful, necessary

There are two instances, one which has the sense of 'needful things' in which the Jews are provided with Bishops, priests, lawbooks and so on *Off all þatt hemm wass þurrfe* (i. 335/9625). In the other the use is as an auxiliary verb where John the Baptist tells his followers they no longer need to follow him when Christ is collecting his own followers *Ne þarrf zuw nohht nu follzhenn me* (ii. 94/12886).

#### Unleavened bread

This is a special use which appears to derive from the sense of 'lacking' and which is found in *Tharrf-cake* as unleavened, although White in his notes prefers the sense that unleavened is a symbol for purity of heart here (1878 p. 997). There are two instances of this use, both of offerings, *All þeorrþ wipþutenn berrme* (i. 32/997) and *Wipþ þerrflinnþ bræd* (i. 53/1588).

#### Collocation

ii. 71/12246-7    ned . . . þarrfe . . . hellpe

ii. 208/16163-4    unnwurrþ . . . unnorne . . . þurrfte

Antonym

None.

### **wædle**

The glossary definition is 'poor, needy'. There are five instances of *wædle*.

#### Material poverty

Four are about the nature of the sacrifices offered by women where the poor woman gives a smaller sacrifice than the rich:

Pe laffdiȝ lac wass litell lac

Forrþi þatt ȝho wass wædle

i. 269/7769

also i. 268/7733; i. 274/7889; i. 275/7933).<sup>43</sup>

#### Voluntary poverty

One instance is about making the choice to embrace voluntary poverty on earth in order to attain heavenly bliss:

Pe firrste seollþe iss þatt tu beo,

All wiþþ þin aȝhenn wille,

All wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell mann,

Forr lufe off eche blisse.

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<sup>43</sup> It is worth noting that one of the earliest attestations of *poure* is in the same context of the offerings at the Purification, in *The Trinity Homilies* MS (335) B. 14. 52. Trinity College Cambridge.



i. 195/5636

### Collocation

i. 195/5638      wrecche . . . wædle . . . usell

i. 268/7732      usell . . . wædle.

i. 269/7769/70    litell . . . . wædle

### Antonym

i. 268/7732/3      wædle . . . riche

### Summary

There are five items from the *TOE* category which are in the 'poverty' category of the Ormulum. *Allmess* is still in the 'poverty' category but the focus in each instance except one is the alms giver and not the recipient. Of the remainder *wædle* retains its position as a central item with the sense 'materially poor' and it has *riche* as an antonym. The other central item in the *TOE* category, *þarrf*, has one instance which could be seen to be in the context of material poverty and one in the context of Christ's life of poverty and humility on earth, but neither of these have the sense 'material poverty'. This item has moved into its sense of 'need' where the thing needed gives the context. It does appear however in its sense 'to lack' and an interesting development of this sense is its use of 'unleavened bread'. The sense 'need' is shared with *ned* which was not a central item in the *TOE* category. This item appears many times in the Ormulum because of its general sense but also because of the often repeated phrases such as 'for our soul's need' or 'for mankind's need' which are used of Christ's incarnation and life and death on earth. There are, however, four instances which are in the context of material poverty and three of these refer to the poor who are in need of help and alms. There is not however a development of this item into a word for the

poor such as '*ned-fol*' or PDE 'needy' which is found elsewhere later.

The last two items are *narrwe* and *nakedd* both of which appear in the context of the poor. *Narrwe* is used figuratively of the pathway to God but also of the crib in which Christ is laid at birth, a reference which is in the context of the emphasis on the material poverty of Christ when he was born. *Nakedd* is used as a direct reference to the 'naked poor', those who qualify for alms because they too poor to be properly clothed. This is a continuation of its sense in the *TOE* category.

## Words from OE but not in the TOE category

### litell

The glossary definitions are 1. 'Little in quantity or space' 2. 'Little, young' 3. 'Little, meanly.' This is used in a range of senses in the *Ormulum*. It is not used of material poverty but is used in that context and it is included because it collocates closely with items that are used with the sense 'material poverty' where it often contributes to the context of the Christian's voluntary poverty and humility on earth. It is used as a comparative *lasse* and a superlative *læste*. I have found fifty instances in total.

### Material poverty

There is one instance which is in the context of material poverty and this describes the sacrifice at the temple given by the poor woman and the context includes *wædle*:

Pe laffdiȝ lac wass litell lac

Forrþi þatt ȝho wass wædle

i. 269/7769

where the sense is that of small in quantity and possibly quality.

### Voluntary poverty

There are six instances which occur in the context of voluntary poverty. These are to do with how the Christian should live on earth. These include wanting little food and drink, little clothing and, in one instance, reference is made to how little room Christ had to be housed (i. 295/8489) - all of which are part of the criteria for which alms are to be given to the poor.

There is the general admonition that Christians should not be tempted to hoard earthly wealth but to *nittenn swiþe littell* (ii. 72/12279). More specifically the example of Christ as a poor man on earth is to teach Christians to want little:

Puss Godess Sune, Allmahhtiȝ Godd,  
Wass wrecche mann onn eorþe  
Forr swa to brinnenn mannkinn onn  
To ȝeornenn affterr litell

i. 127/3700

Holy men *takenn fode 7 clap Unnorne 7 litell baþe* (i. 272/7853) and the phrase *unnorne 7 litell* is used twice more of food (i. 261/7540; ii. 47/11548).

### Humility

There are two instances which are concerned with humility. Christ's experiences in his earthly form are a model for Christian humility and *unnorneliȝ* is used as an adjective in addition to *litell* in both these instances. Christ:

Purh soþ meocnesse laȝhenn,  
7 lætenn swiþe unnorneliȝ



7 litell off þe sellfenn.

i. 129/3749

and following Christ's example of humility and judging oneself lowly, but thinking well of others, is the pathway to Paradise:

Uss birrþ lætenn unnorneli3

7 litell off uss sellfenn,

7 lætenn wel off oþre menn

i. 260/7525

There are two instances in which Christ made man is described as *lasse þann an/* *hiss enngell* (i. 128/3739; i. 129/3745).

### Range of people

There is one instance which is *7 forrþi let he cwelleenn þa Þe miccle 7 ec þe littell* (i. 278/8001) but this is not quite the formulaic sense that 'the poor and the rich' carries in some other texts such as *Lazamon* as here it is connected with the context.

### Young

There are five instances in which *litell* carries the sense 'young'. Of these one refers to the children killed on Herod's orders as *litell barrness* (i. 279/8040). Three instances concern John the Baptist, twice as *Fra þatt he wass full litell* (i. 109/3205; i. 319/9146;) and once *Whann he wass 3et full litell* (i. 110/3216). One instance is used with *child*: *A33 whil þatt I wass litell child* (i. 279/8053).

### Small of things or space

The remaining instances describe the smallness of things or space and are a literal sense.. Sometimes these are material things such as water (i. 300/8634), sometimes they are intangible such as wit (i. 178/5158). There is an interesting parallel here with the sense of physical constraint that *narrwe* carries.

### Collocation

- i. 127/3700      wrecche . . . litell
- i. 129/3749-51    meocnesse lazhenn . . . unnorneli3 . . . litell
- i. 260/7525-6      unnorneli3 . . . litell
- i. 261/7540      Unnorne . . . litell
- i. 269/7769      litell . . . wædle
- i. 272/7853-4      Unnorne . . . litell
- ii. 47/11548      Unnorne . . . litell.

### Antonym

- i. 102/2986      litell . . . mikell
- i. 128/3716      litell . . . mikell
- i. 277/8001      miccle . . . litell
- i. 278/8001      miccle . . . litell
- i. 295/8489      litell . . . miccle

### **nipprenn**

The glossary definition is 'to bring low, to humble'. There are fourteen instances.

*Nippren* collocates with *lahzhenn* and with *wansenn* which is the reason for its inclusion. None of the instances are in the context of material poverty except that they

are used of Christ's experience on earth, and once refer to how men should emulate Christ's experience. In that sense then there can be said to be an element of voluntary poverty and humility.

#### Of Christ on earth

There are five instances that refer to Christ being brought down, figuratively and literally, by being made flesh on earth. This is a lessening of Christ:

Nippredd 7 wannsedd wunnderrli3

7 lazhedd inn himm sellfenn

i. 128/3730

Three of these instances refer to the lowering of Christ in this way simply by the act of being made flesh (ii. 131/13965; ii. 316/19214; ii. 316/19219) and one instance refers to the Pharisees who wish to bring Christ down:

Forrþi þe33 wolldenn nipþrenn Crist

7 lazhenn himm þe mare

ii. 282/18256

#### Of man on earth

The vagaries of men's fortunes on earth lead some to be up and some to be down, *A33 upp, 7 nipþrenn opre* (ii. 121/13681), but again it is in making the choice to follow Christ in his lowness on earth that leads to reward in heaven:



Þatt uss birrþ alle lazhenn uss

7 niþþrenn uss onn erþe

ii. 131/13970

It is the aim of the devil to bring men on earth down in sin, which is a very different thing to bringing oneself down through humility and voluntary poverty in imitation of Christ:

þe laþe gast

A33 niþþreþþ Godess genge,

7 cwelleþþ hemm 7 wannseþþ hemm

i. 279/8031

Here Herod is a token of the way the devil behaves to men. Again *niþþren* and *wansenn* collocate. The devil's aim is *To werrseenn 7 to niþþrenn uss* (ii. 57/11845) through tempting us to sin.

With the sense 'to defeat'

There is an element of wishing to bring down in defeat in the last instance concerning Christ and the Pharisees as well as in the instances in which the devil wishes to bring man down through sin, and this sense is present in two other instances. Herod fears that the Wise Men wish to bring him down and take his kingdom from him:

For þatt he wennde þatt tatt folle

Upponn himm cumenn wære

Wiþþ strenncþe, forr to niþþrenn himm,

To wannsenn himm hiss riche.

i. 248/7154

and here the word *wannsenn* is a close collocative partner again. The object to be brought down need not be human, as *woh* 'error, wrong, wickedness' can also be brought down, *To niþþrenn woh wiþþ all hiss mahht* (ii. 208/16140).

### Literal

There are three instances in which the bringing down is a physical act upon the physical world, although with metaphoric overtones, in which high hills are levelled, in conjunction with low land being raised (i. 321/9206; i. 335/9604; i. 336/9636).

### Collocation

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| i. 128/3730-1   | Niþþredd . . . wannsedd . . . laʒhedd  |
| i. 248/7156-7   | niþþrenn . . . wannsenn                |
| i. 279/8032-3   | niþþreþþ . . . cwelleþþ . . . wannseþþ |
| i. 321/9206     | niþþredd . . . laʒhedd;                |
| i. 335/9604     | niþþredd . . . laʒhedd;                |
| i. 336/9636     | laʒhedd . . . niþþredd.                |
| ii. 57/11845    | werrsenn . . . niþþrenn                |
| ii. 131/13965-6 | laʒhenn . . . niþþrenn                 |
| ii. 131/13970-1 | laʒhenn . . . niþþrenn                 |
| ii. 282/18256-7 | niþþrenn . . . laʒhenn                 |
| ii. 316/19214   | niþþrenn . . . laʒhenn                 |

## Antonym

- ii. 121/13682      upp . . . niþþrenn
- ii. 316/19219-20 wurrþenn . . . niþþrenn

## **unnorne**

The glossary definition is 'Plain, simple, rude'. There are nine instances of *unnorne* and four instances of *unnorneliz*. There is close collocation with items from the poverty category in the Ormulum, most notably *wrecche* and *usell*, which is why it is included.

## Material poverty

There are two instances that are of Christ on earth. This instance describes Christ in the poverty of his birth:

Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell child  
Inn ure mennisscnesse  
Forr þatt he wolde inn heoffness ærd  
Uss alle makenn riche.

i. 126/3668

where the three collocative words in the first line have *riche* as their antonym in the last. An important element is the humanness of Christ on earth and his incarnation in the body of a man is contrasted with his spiritual nature:

Forr Godess Sune Allmahhtiȝ Godd,  
Þatt all þe weorelld wrohhte,



Warrþ an unnorne 7 wrecche mann

i. 168/4882

and it is the imitation of this physical poverty through voluntary poverty that gains the Christian the riches of heaven.

### Voluntary poverty

It is not only Christ as a man that is described as *unnorne*, as this word is also frequently used of the nature of food and clothing for those following Christ's example in the wilderness, as voluntary poverty. There are five instances of this. The food, drink and clothes that Holy Men use are described as *unnorne*:

7 himm birrþ takenn fode 7 clap

Unnorne 7 litell baþe

i. 272/7853

and this is coupled here with *litell*. *Unnorne* here is not a description of quantity but rather of quality. In two further instances *unnorne* is coupled with *litell* (i. 261/7540; ii. 47/11548) and in two instances it stands alone:

Forr himm birrþ beon full clene mann,

7 all wiþþutenn ahhte,

Buttan þatt mann himm findenn shall

Unnorne mete 7 wæde.

i. 219/6334

and also as a reference to the food of Christ and his disciples (i. 261/7546).

The sense here is of *unnorne* as 'plain' and 'simple' as in the MED definition<sup>44</sup> in this context of being able to choose earthly pleasure but forgoing it for spiritual reward, even in the quality of the necessities of life.

### Humility

There is the additional use of *unnorne* in the context of how Christians should view or value themselves. Christians should follow Christ *unnorneliȝ* (i. 168/4886) and the instruction is explicit that people should think of themselves as lowly but think well of others:

Uss birrþ lætenn unnorneliȝ

7 litell off uss sellfenn,

7 lætenn wel off oþre menn

i. 260/7525

This is linked to true meekness *sop meocnesse* (i. 129/3749).

The emphasis on the lowliness of Christians on earth is allied to the example of Christ on earth, as for instance Christ at the Cleansing of the Temple when he had not yet declared himself the son of God and was unknown, and not held in respect:

7 Crist wass þær all unncuþ ȝet

7 unnwurp, 7 unnorne

ii. 208/16162

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<sup>44</sup> (a) Plain, simple, unelaborated; also, without physical appeal, unattractive; of food or drink: not dainty, not choice;

Living *unnorneliȝ* can be imposed by others and does not carry the virtue it has if it is self imposed as an act of humility. Herod's son, Arrchelauss, who ruled after him was driven out by Augustus to a land called Vienne where he died living in obscurity, presumably without heavenly reward:

- i. 286/8251      7 tære he wass unnorneliȝ  
                          7 tære he toc hiss ende.

### Plain and simple

There is one example of *unnorne* describing faith in Christ:

- 7 swa to lefenn uppo Crist  
 Wass riht unnorne læfe  
 ii. 231/16808

### Collocation

- i. 126/3668      Unnorne . . . wrecche . . . usell
- i. 129/3749-51   meocnesse laȝhenn . . . unnorneliȝ . . . litell
- i. 168/4884      unnorne . . . wrecche
- i. 260/7525-6    unnorneliȝ . . . litell
- i. 261/7540      Unnorne . . . litell,
- i. 272/7853-4    Unnorne . . . litell
- ii. 47/11548      Unnorne . . . litell.
- ii. 208/16163-4   unnwurrþ . . . unnorne . . . þurrfte



## Antonym

i. 126/3668-71 Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell . . . riche.

i. 260/7525-7 unnorneliȝ . . . litell . . . wel

## unntrummnesse

The glossary has 'infirmity' as the definition. There are six instances, one of which collocates with *wake*.

## Illness

There is one instance that refers to the sick that come to hear Christ so that they may be healed (i. 186/5379).

## Of the fleshly/earthly life

There are three instances that use a recurring phrase that refers to the nature of man on earth, the life of the flesh: *flæshess unntrummnesse* (I. 72; i. 139/4047; ii. 60/11938).

John the Baptist refers to himself twice in this way: *7 icc amm an erþlike mann*  
*Inn unntrummnesse stenedd* (ii. 285/18322) and where there is collocation with *wac*:

Forr icc amm i me sellfenn wac

7 full off unntrummnesse

ii. 185/18328

## Collocation

I. 72 flæshess unntrummnesse

- i. 139/4047      flæshess unntrummesse
- ii. 60/11938      flæshess unntrummesse
- ii. 185/18328-9    wac . . . unntrummesse

Antonym

None.

### **unnwurrþ**

The glossary has 'mean, of no repute'. There is one instance that collocates with *unnorne* which is why it is included.<sup>45</sup>

#### Of no repute - powerless?

The instance described Christ at the cleansing of the temple when he had not yet declared himself the Son of God and was unknown - *unncup*:

7 Crist wass þær all unncup 3et

7 unnwurrþ, 7 unnorne

ii. 208/16162

Collocation

- i. 208/16163-4    unnwurrþ . . . unnorne

Antonym

None.

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<sup>45</sup> There is one instance of the verb *unnwurrþeþþ* 'to dishonour' which is used of John the Baptist who is accused of baptising people that should be baptised by Christ and so dishonouring him. This does not collocate with any 'poverty' words and is not in the context of poverty.

## wake

The glossary definition is 'Weak, vile, poor'. There are eight instances, one of which is used as a verb (ii. 50/11653). It does not collocate with any of the other items in the poverty vocabulary of the Ormulum except *unntrumnesse* but there are two instances in which it is used of the materially poor and in White's glossary (1878) the definition is given as 'weak, vile, poor'. Neither the OED nor the MED includes the definition 'poor'.

### Material poverty

Making amends for sin through helping the poor is a theme through the Ormulum. Managing your possessions so that you can give to the poor brings salvation:

7 hellpenn a þe wake leod

Att alle kinne nede,

i. 354/ 10161

The nature of the *wake leod* is more clearly spelt out in the following passage where they are in need of food and clothing.

To takenn wiþþ þe wake leod,

To fedenn hemm 7 clapenn

i. 92/2709

Providing food and clothing for the poor was a traditional form of alms and it seems clear here that the *wake leod* are the materially poor.



### Of the flesh/human condition

The way in which people view themselves is an important element in their spirituality. As seen above, to view oneself as *unnorne* and to view others well is a sign of spirituality, however God sees into men and it is a sign of *modiznesse* to see oneself as good and other men as weak:

7 haldenn hemm forr gode menn

7 opre menn forr wake

ii. 121/13670

There are two instances in which *wake* is used for the nature of man on earth. The earthly nature of man is that of weakness:

Forr icc amm i me sellfenn wac

ii. 285/18328

and this is the state that Christ helps man with. Sin increases this weak nature of man:

Forr gluternesse waccneþþ all.

ii. 50/11653

### Of women

Women in particular are seen as *wake* and there is a discussion of the relative natures of male and female children. The male child has good strength and deeds, but the female is equivalently weak:

7 ma33dennchild bitacneþþ uss

Wac mihht i gode dedess

i. 274/7897

In a discussion about wives and husbands it is acknowledged that either may be the one who is in need of help, however the wife may be *Wittlæs*, *7 wac*, *7 wicke* (i. 214/6185).

#### Metaphoric/Literal

There is one instance of *wake* being applied to faith:

Forr þe33re wake trowwþe

ii. 221/16533

#### Collocation

i. 214./6185      Wittlæs . . . wac . . .wicke

i. 354/ 10161-2   wake . . . nede

ii. 185/18328-9   wac . . . unntrummesse

#### Antonym

ii. 121/13670-1   gode . . . wake

#### **wannsenn**

The glossary defines this as 'to lessen, take away'. It is included because it collocates with *nipþrenn* and *la3henn*. There are eight instances. None of them carry the sense

'material poverty'.

### Of Christ

Christ becoming flesh involved a lessening of himself:

Niþpredd 7 wannsedd wunderrliȝ

7 laȝhedd inn himm sellfenn

i. 128/3730

### In the context of 'defeat'

Christ rose up to lessen or defeat death 7 *Crist ras upp off dæþess slap, Forr dæþess nahht to wannsenn* (i. 64/1903). Herod was suspicious of the Wise Men, of whom he thought they were coming to defeat him and take his kingdom: *Wiþþ strenncþe, forr to niþþrenn himm, To wannsenn himm hiss riche*. (i. 248/7154). Herod himself was a sign of how the devil wanted to lessen and defeat God's people:

Forr all swa summ þe laþe gast

Aȝȝ niþþreþþ Godess genge,

7 cwelleþþ hemm 7 wannseþþ hemm

i. 279/8031

### Using the pair *wannsenn* and *waxenn*

As a comparison between parallel waxing and waning, there is a literal use about the shortening nights and lengthening days in March: 7 *Marrchess nahhtes wannsenn aȝȝ 7 Marrchess dazes waxen* (i. 64/1901). In a less literal sense John the Baptist twice



compares his fortunes to those of Christ, each time in the same words:

Ned iss, 7 itt bihofeþþ wel  
Þatt he nu forrþwarrrd waxe,  
7 ec iss ned 7 god off me  
Þatt I nu forrþward wannse.

ii. 272/17966

also at ii. 290/18480.

### To lessen

There is one instance of a literal use as 'to lessen' which is in the context of alms giving but does not have in itself any context of poverty. This is an admonition against those who do not want to lessen their own wealth for any other man's need:

3iff þatt tu nillt nohht wannsenn itt  
Forr naness manness nede

ii 71/1222

### Collocation

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1. 128/3730-1 | nippredd . . . wansedd . . . la3hedd   |
| i. 228/7156-7 | nipbrenn . . . wannsenn                |
| i. 279/8032-3 | nipbreþþ . . . cwelleþþ . . . wannseþþ |

### Antonym

- |              |                       |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| i. 64/1901-2 | wannsenn . . . waxenn |
|--------------|-----------------------|

ii. 272/17967-9    waxe . . . wannse

ii. 290/18481-3    waxe . . . wannse

### **wrecche**

The glossary definition is 1. 'A wretch'. 2. 'Wretched'. 3. 'Wretchedly, miserably'.

There are twenty instances in various forms. It carries the sense 'material poverty' although this sense is not given in the glossary.

### Material poverty

There are eleven instances of *wrecche* which are in the context of material poverty. Of these, one refers to the poor in which Christians with two cloaks are told to give one to the poor:

Patt te birrþ forr þe lufe off Godd

Wiþþ usell wrecche dælenn

i. 353/10139

The remainder of the instances are concerned with Christ, of these four are about Christ's birth. Three of these instances refer to Christ's swaddling at his birth:

He wollde wundenn ben forr uss

I wrecche winndeclutes

i. 126/3674

and the same phrase at i. 114/3326. He is described as *wundenn þær swa wrecchelīȝ* (i.

114/3326) in the manger. His birth is into poverty but also into humanity  
*mennisnesse*:

Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell child  
Inn ure menissnesse  
Forr þatt he wolde inn heoffness ærd  
Uss alle makenn riche.

i. 126/3668

The remaining five instances are of Christ's life. In the paradox of he who made  
the world becoming man:

Forr Godess Sune Allmahhti3 Godd,  
Patt all þe weoreld wrohhte,  
Warrþ an unnorne 7 wrecche mann

i. 168/4882

It is difficult, as so often with the 'poverty' vocabulary, to separate the strands of  
meaning and while the context of Christ's life on earth is that of poverty there is also  
an element of his powerlessness, particularly here, and his human weakness in the use  
of *wrecche*. In the passage concerning Christ's temptation in the wilderness there is a  
complexity in the argument about Christ's earthly nature in that he cannot be a *sinnfull*  
*mann and wrecche* as he is sinless, but had he come to earth and been *skapelæs*  
'unharm'd' that would have been the sin of *modiznesse* (ii. 64/12049). Play is made of  
the paradox, too that Christ was born and lived *wrecche* to make mankind *riche*:



Patt Godd Allmahhtiȝ wurrþenn wass  
 ȝung child inn ure kinde,  
 7 wrecche child off wrecche kinn,  
 Patt doþ uss tunnderrstanndenn  
 Patt uss birrþ mikell lufenn Crist,  
 7 leofenn himm 7 wurrþenn,  
 Off þatt he wollde himm sellfenn swa  
 Forr ure lufe laȝhenn,  
 134 7 off þatt he warreþ wrecche mann  
 Forr us to makenn riche,

i. 133/3876-85

This pattern of *riche* and *wrecche* is found in other texts of this period. Here God Almighty is transformed into a young child of our kind, a wretched child of a wretched kin, to make us understand how much we should love and worship Christ who chose to lower himself for love of us and because he made himself a poor man to enrich us.

#### Voluntary poverty

That we should emulate Christ's poverty on earth is explicit:

Þuss Godess Sune, Allmahhtiȝ Godd,  
 Wass wrecche mann onn eorþe  
 Forr swa to brinnenn mannkinn onn  
 To ȝeornenn affterr litell  
 Forr þatt he lufeþþ alle þa

Patt hise lazhess haldenn  
7 lufenn, forr þe lufe off himm,  
To libbenn her onn eorþe  
Full wrecchelike inn uselldom  
Off metess 7 of clāþess.

i. 127/3700

God's son was made a poor man on earth so that we might long for little, and he loves all those that hold his laws and who love, for love of him, to live here on earth destitute in poverty of food and clothes. It is difficult to translate the words *wrecchelike inn uselldom* partly because *wrecchelike* has overtones of the connection with the fleshly life and of low status as well as poverty. It is more difficult when, in the context of voluntary poverty again, another word is added:

All wiþþ þin aʒhenn wille,  
All wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell mann,  
Forr lufe off eche blisse.

i. 195/5637

#### The human condition

Emphasis is placed above on Christ's birth into our *kinde* which is as a *wrecche child* (i. 134/3877-8) and our *wrecche kinde* (i. 20/663) is our fleshly state on earth. In the section on the turning of the water into wine at Cana, the people who are affected by drunkenness are referred to as *wrecche lede* (ii. 180/15375), *wrecche follc* (ii. 181/15390) and as *wrecchess* (ii. 181/15439).

### Of the soul

Although *wrecche* is used of our fleshly life it is also, as in other early Middle English texts<sup>46</sup>, used of the soul. Circumcision is a way of clipping away *Pe flæshess fule wille* from the *wrecche sawle* (i. 146/4248), and the soul is described as *wrecche* when in danger through our bad behaviour (i. 179/5191; ii. 204/16022).

### Collocation

- i. 126/3668      Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell
- i. 127/3708      wrecchelike . . . uselldom
- i. 133-4/3883-4    la3henn . . . wrecche
- i. 168/4884      unnorne 7 wrecche
- i. 195/5638      wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell
- i. 353/10140      usell wrecche
- ii. 64/12049      sinnfull . . . wrecche

### Antonym

- i. 133/3884-5      wrecche . . . riche

### Summary

There are eight OE words which have entered the category but which were not in the *TOE* category. Some of these have peripheral senses which are present through family resemblance but there are some which occupy a central space. One of the central items is *wrecche* which is used of the materially poor themselves, as well as of Christ in his poverty on earth, and has *riche* as an antonym. It is also used of voluntary poverty. It collocates closely with *unnorne* which is used in the context of Christ's material poverty on earth, and of the clothing, food and drink of the holy ones who follow him

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<sup>46</sup> such as the AB group.



in voluntary poverty. This extends to the sense of 'humility' in which self regard is of vital importance. To see oneself as *unnorne* is to be humble, whereas to be defeated and live out one's days as *unnorne* does not carry the same virtue. There is one instance of *unnwurrþ* which collocates with *unnorne* and this describes Christ before he was made known as the son of God, when he was seen simply as a man.

Interestingly *wrecche* is one of the words used of the fleshly, earthly life but it is also used of the soul. Another item used of the fleshly nature of man is *unntrumnesse* which has no material poverty sense but has the sense 'illness'. This collocates with *wake*, hence its inclusion, and *wake* too is used of man's earthly flesh. It is also used specifically of women. It is interesting though that while *wake* is given no sense 'poverty' or 'poor' in either the MED or the OED, in White's glossary it is and in the instance in which it is used in this sense, the sense 'materially poor' is clear.

There are instances of *litell* in its literal sense and it also means 'young' but it is used in the context of material poverty when the sacrifice made by the poor woman in the temple is 'little'. In the context of voluntary poverty wanting little food and clothing is important and reference is made to the little room that Christ had, when he was poorly housed on earth. There are echoes here of the similar use of *narrwe* in *AW*. Humility is expressed by thinking little of oneself and this echoes Christ's experience on earth when the act of taking on flesh brought him down. This is expressed by *nipþrenn* which does not have the sense 'material poverty' although it is used of the changing fortunes of men on earth where some are raised up and some are brought down. This collocates with *wannsenn* which has no sense of material poverty but has the sense 'to lessen'.

## Words from ON

### lah

The glossary definition is 'low', with the comparative being 'lower, inferior' and the verb being 'to lower, depress'. There are thirty instances of *lah* and its forms. None of the instances have the sense 'material poverty'. It collocates with *wrecche* and *wansenn*.

### Literal

There are six instances in which *lah* is used in a literal sense. Three of these are straightforward, in that they describe the physical arrangement of the benches at the wedding feast at Cana (ii. 175/15232; ii. 176/15246 and 7). Three describe hills being brought down while valleys are raised up and are a literal description that acts as a symbolic illustration (i. 321/9206; i. 334/9604; i. 336/9636).

### Inferior

There are six instances with connotations of inferiority. This particularly refers to the relationship between Mary and Elizabeth in which Elizabeth is inferior to Mary:

Pohh wass 3ho miccle lahre

Pann ure laffdi3 Mar3e wass

i. 90/2664

and also of Mary and Elizabeth at i. 91/2678; i. 93/2744; i. 94/2770. This is also used to refer to the relationship of the young to the old *Patt lah3hre wass bitwenenn menn 7 3unn3re mann onn elde* (ii. 107/ 13270) and in a general sense (i. 94/2756).

### Of Christ

Seven instances refer to Christ. One is when the Pharisees wish to humble Christ (ii. 282/18257). The remaining six refer to Christ being lowered when he took the form of a man on earth. Christ has the nature of God, which is described as 'high' and the nature of man, which is described as 'low' *hiss lazhe kinde* (ii. 128/13901). The act of becoming flesh in itself lessened and lowered Christ, ii. 131/13965 and:

Nippredd 7 wannsedd wunnderrli3,  
7 lazhedd inn himm sellfenn,  
Forr o þatt hallf þatt he wass mann  
i. 128/3730

but in addition he became a *wrecche mann*:

Forr ure lufe lazhenn,  
7 off þatt he warreþ wrecche mann  
Forr us to makenn riche,  
i. 133-4/3883-5

and at ii. 19/10760; ii. 316/19214.

### Humility

Humility is an important element for Christ's followers on earth and Christ's example of lowering himself when he became human is in itself a model for Christians to follow by being low and meek on earth, seeing themselves as beneath their inferiors as



Christ did when he was humble before men:

Forr niss nan mann þatt æfre ma33

Meocnesse mare shæwenn

Pann he dop, whase la3heþþ himm

Bineþenn hise lahhre

ii. 18/10736

Mary is a prime example of humility, particularly for those whom God has exalted on earth, as she has the special quality of having been exalted by God on earth and yet still seeing herself as humble which makes her an apt model for those whom God has raised in earthly fortune:

Forr þatt 3ho wollde 3ifenn uss

God bisne in hire sellfenn,

Off þatt tatt uss birrþ la3henn uss

3iff Godd uss he3heþþ here

i. 89/2637

The association of being 'low' with the quality of Christian humility is frequently made (i. 129/3746 and 3749; ii. 18/10727; ii. 18/10747; ii. 58/11864; ii. 131/13970). Although it is possible to be over humble (ii. 17/10714).

#### Collocation

i. 90/2644      meocnesse . . . la3henn

i. 128/3730-1      Nippredd 7 wannsedd . . . 7 la3hedd

- i. 129/3749-50    meocnesse lazhenn . . . unnorneliz 7 litell
- i. 133-4/3883-4    lazhenn . . . wrecche
- i. 321/9206        nippredd . . . lazhedd
- i. 335/9604        nippredd . . . lazhedd
- i. 336/9636        7 lazhedd all 7 nippredd.
- ii. 17/10714-6    meoc . . . lazhenn
- ii. 17/10737-8    Meocnesse . . . lazheþþ
- ii. 58/11864       meokenn . . . 7 lazhenn
- ii. 131/13965-6   lazhenn . . . nipprenn
- ii. 131/13970-1   lazhenn . . . nipprenn
- ii. 282/18256-7   nipprenn . . . 7 lazhenn
- ii. 316/19214     nipprenn . . . 7 lazhenn

#### Antonym

- i. 89/2639-40    lazhenn . . . he3heþþ
- i. 321/9204-6    he3hedd . . . lazhedd
- i. 334/9602-4    he3hedd . . . lazhedd
- ii. 176/15246-7   heh . . . lah . . . lazhesst

#### meoc

The glossary has 'meek'. There are fifty five instances in varying forms. It collocates with *lazhenn*.

#### Of Christ

There are eight instances which relate to Christ. All of them are in the context of

Christ's life as an example to us of meekness. Of these two refer to the circumstances of Christ's birth (i. 257/7423; i. 257/7427), one to his shaming (i. 171/4969; i. 171/4971), two in the passage about his acceptance of baptism from John the Baptist (ii. 24/10915; ii. 24/10917) and two of his more general example.

#### Of Mary

There are six instances which concern Mary. Three describe her (i. 90/2647; i. 86/2535; i. 89/2636;) and another makes the comparison that those men raised on earth by God should show meekness like Mary's:

Purh sob meocnesse lazhenn

i. 90/2644

There is another instance that refers to how meek Mary and Joseph were with each other (i. 85/2501) and one in which Joseph is told to be meek with Mary when he knows about her pregnancy (i. 84/2487).

#### Of other holy figures

There are eight examples of angels and holy men showing meekness: God's angel (i. 20/667); David in three instances (ii. 164/14913; ii. 164/14921; ii. 165/14944); Simon (ii. 108/13314); St. John (i. 327/9385); John the Baptist when he did not want to baptise Christ (ii. 23/10895). The apostles are not described themselves as meek but they teach us to be meek because they are unlearned men and yet we follow them (ii. 130/13950).

#### Of how Christians should be

There are thirty-three instances which are concerned with how Christians should



behave, and how they should view themselves.<sup>47</sup> The majority of all the references to meekness are in the context of the necessity for true Christians to be meek and in discussions about how the nature of meekness is concerned with lowering the self and not thinking oneself above others. Obedience *herrsumnesse* and meekness *meocnesse* are vital to each other. The antithesis of meekness is pride *modiznessess*.

As can be seen in the collocations below, the concept of lowering the self is an important element in meekness, even to the extent of lowering oneself beneath those who are beneath us:

Forr niss nan mann þatt æfre ma33

Meocnesse mare shæwenn

Þann he doþ whase la3heþþ himm

Bineþenn hise lah3hre

ii. 17/10736

although of course the sin of pride occurs if the meekness is overdone.

#### Collocation

i. 20/667-8	meoc 7 milde 7 softe 7 bliþe
i. 41/1252	milde 7 meoc
i. 84.2487	milde 7 mec
i. 90/2644	meocnesse . . . la3henn
i. 124/3606	æddmode 7 meoke 7 milde

<sup>47</sup> i. 38/1170; i. 39/1189; i. 41/1252; i. 51/1546; i. 88/2605; i. 124/3606; i. 129/3749; i. 171/4969, 4971; i. 217/6276; i. 260/7523, 7525; i. 278/8009; ii. 17/10695, 10697, 10699, 10708, 10711, 10715, 10716, 10720, 10721, 10733, 10737; ii. 18/10720; ii. 24/10907; ii. 41/11392; ii. 58/11864; ii. 121/13688; ii. 164/14917; ii. 288/18433; ii. 289/18459.

- i. 129/3749      meocnesse . . . la3henn . . . unnormeli3 . . . litell
- i. 171/4971      milde 7 meoc
- i. 278/8009      milde 7 meoc
- ii. 17/10697-8    meoc 7 herrsumm
- ii. 17/10714-6    meoc . . . la3henn
- ii. 17/10737-8    meocnesse . . . la3heþþ
- ii. 58/11864      meokenn . . . la3henn
- ii. 108/13315      ædmod 7 mec 7 milde
- ii. 164/14913      7 softe 7 mec 7 milde

#### Antonym

- i. 51/1544-46      modi3le33e . . . meocle33e
- i. 217/6276-7      meocle33e . . . modi3nesse
- ii. 288/18433-5    mecnesse . . . modi3nessess

#### usell

The glossary definition is 'Wretched, miserable, mean in condition'. In the MED the only citations for this word and its forms are from the *Ormulum*. There are eight instances of this item in the *Ormulum*, of which one is the form *uselldom*. A case can be made for a sense being 'material poverty'.

#### Material poverty

As with other items in the 'poverty' category sometimes the sense 'miserable' or 'mean' could fit the context equally well, but *usell* is so often bound up through close

collocation with other central items in the category that the sense 'material poverty' could be argued to be present in its use.

i. Of the poor

The clearest context of straightforward material poverty comes in two instances in which the referent is the poor themselves. One is in the context of the sacrifice made by new mothers in the temple:

Patt wass þatt lac þatt ta wass sett,

Amang Judisskenn þeode,

Purh Drihhtin sellfenn to þat wif

Patt usell wass 7 wædle.

To riche wif Godd haffde sett

An lamb 7 ec an cullfre

i. 268/7729

God requires more from a rich woman, but a woman who was *usell . . . 7 wædle* gave less.<sup>48</sup> Here *usell* collocates with one of the central items from the *TOE* poverty category and in the next passage it collocates with what I suggest is one of the central items from the early Middle English period:

Patt te birrþ forr þe lufe off Godd

Wiþþ usell wrecche dælenn

i. 353/ 10139

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<sup>48</sup> This is the context in which the first surviving recorded use of *poure* occurs in a1225 (?a1200) *Trin. Hom.* (Trin-C B.14.52) 47: *Hie..brohte þat child mid hire in to þe temple and offredde loc for him..gif hie was riche wimman, a lomb..gif hie was poure, two duue briddes.* (MED)



Here the context is that of sharing and giving a cloak to a poor man, a *usell* *wrecche* who is then the recipient of charitable giving. While both these instances of *usell* could be translated as 'wretched' I suggest that the element of material poverty is present here too.

ii. Mean and poor food and clothing

Holy men are presented, particularly when in the wilderness, as living lives that are poor in the sense of food and clothing. John the Baptist and Christ are described in this way:

Forr baþe leddenn usell lif

I metess 7 i clapess

i. 28/891

Here *usell* has no collocative partners and carries the sense of deprivation, in terms of food and clothing. It is used in the same sense in the following passage about Christ:

Puss Godess Sune, Allmahhti3 Godd,

Wass wrecche mann onn eorþe . . .

Full wrecchelike innuselldom

Off metess 7 of clapess.

i. 127/3700-9

although here it collocates with *wrecchelike*.

### iii. Of Christ at his birth

Poverty is a key element in the context of the birth of Christ, and he is laid in the crib as an *Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell child* (i. 126/3668).

#### Voluntary poverty

In order to gain eternal bliss Christians on earth should of their own will follow Christ's example:

Pe firrste seollþe iss þatt tu beo,  
All wiþþ þin aʒhenn wille,  
All wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell mann,  
Forr lufe off eche blisse  
i. 195/5636

Here the close collocation is with two words of which *wædle* was a central item in the *TOE* category and *wrecche* was a central item in the early Middle English category.

#### Powerlessness

It is interesting that *usell* appears three times without close collocation and in one of those times the main sense may have more to do with powerlessness than material deprivation. This instance concerns the devil tempting Christ in the wilderness:

Forr þatt he sahh himm usell wiht  
Inn ure mennisscnesse

ii. 48/11591

Here the important element is that the devil saw Christ as potentially vulnerable to temptation because of his *mennisnesse* - humanness. His material poverty is less important in this possible vulnerability than his change of state from one of purely Godlike power to one of part human frailty.

Another instance in which *usell* stands alone is the statement that Christ was made *usell* for our need:

Off þatt he wass an usell mann

Forr ure nede wurrþenn

ii. 131/13978

where it is not possible from the context to tease out a sense of the various elements that may be present except in so far as the focus is the transformation of Christ into humanity.

#### Collocation

- |               |                             |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| i. 126/3668   | Unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell   |
| i. 127/3708   | wrecchelike . . . uselldom  |
| i. 195/5638   | All wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell |
| i. 268/7732   | usell . . . 7 wædle.        |
| i. 353/ 10140 | usell wrecche               |

#### Antonym

- |             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| i. 268/7729 | usell . . . riche |
|-------------|-------------------|



## wanntsumm

The glossary defines this as 'indigent, poor.' There is one instance.<sup>49</sup>

### Material poverty

The context is that of charitable giving to whoever is seen to be in need:

To gengenn att te nede

Whammse þu sest tatt wanttsumm iss

7 wipþ wanndraþ biþrungenn

ii. 161/14823

### Collocation

None

### Antonym

None

### Summary

There are four Scandinavian loan words which appear in the 'poverty' category. Two of these, *lah* and *meoc*, go on to become widespread in PDE and two do not, *wanttsumm* and *usell*, the latter of which is only attested at all in these instances from the Ormulum.

*Meoc* is included because it collocates with *lah* but it does not have the sense

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<sup>49</sup> There is an instance of *wannt* ii. 146/14398 *Acc hemm wass wantt gastlic innsihht* and one of *wanntteþþ* ii. 110/133380 *7 all þatt wanttteþþ Cristess hald All sinkeþþ inntill helle*, but they are not in the context of poverty, nor do they collocate with items from the 'poverty' category.

'material poverty' and it is used in its PDE sense 'meek'. One item, *wantsumm*, does not collocate with any of the other items in the category and is only used once but in that instance it has the sense 'materially poor'.

*Usell* is in close collocation with other, central, items such as *wædle* and *wrecche* and although it does not carry the central sense in the dictionaries, its relationship to items that do is very close. It is used of the poor wife in the temple who is required to make only a small sacrifice, as well as of the poor man with whom the Christian should share his cloak. It is used in the context of the holy men who live in poverty in the wilderness, and in the context of the voluntary poverty that the Christian should espouse who is following Christ's example. It is therefore present in a central sense and closely connected to other items that are central.

*Lah* is used in its literal sense, and figuratively meaning 'young'. It has close connection to the context of inferiority and humility and is used often of Mary's humility in her position as the mother of Christ. It also expresses the contrast between Christ's earthly life and his life in heaven.

### **Items from OFr**

none

## **Discussion**

### **Collocation**

There is collocation with items from outside and inside the 'poverty' category as follows, where the numbers count the different items for example *ned* collocates with three items from inside the category and one item outside it:

<u>Item:</u>	<u>inside the category</u>	<u>outside the category</u>
allmess	1	2
nakedd	0	5
narrwe	0	1
ned	3	1
þarrf	1	0
wædle	3	0
litell	6	0
nipþrenn	2	2
unnorne	6	0
unntrum	1	1
unnwurrþ	1	0
wac	2	2
wannsenn	2	1
wrecche	5	1
lah	6	0
meoc	3	5
usell	3	0
wanntsumm	0	0

Clearly this must be read with some caveats. Some of these items appear only a few times, such as *wanntsumm*, which occurs only once, and so it is not surprising there are no collocations. Others appear regularly in a phrase with several near synonyms, such as *meoc*, or appear in a list, such as *nakedd* which appears in a list of the other conditions that constitute the need for alms and this one instance accounts for all the five collocations for *nakedd* in column two.



Collocative relationships with items outside the 'poverty' category

There are eight items that do not collocate outside the category:

lah; litell; þarrf; unnorne; unnwurrþ; usell; wædle; wantsumm.

Ten items have collocative relationships with words that are outside the 'poverty' category of which only two share a collocative partner, *nipþrenn* and *wannsenn* which are in a phrase together with *cwelleþþ*. Other than this there are no external shared relationships:

allmess:	dede; werkes.
meoc:	æddmode; blipe; herrsumm; milde; softe.
nakedd:	bandes; herrberrþhelæs; hunngrið; sec; þrissti.
narrwe:	stih; cribbe.
ned:	hellpe.
nipþrenn:	cwelleþþ; werrseinn.
unntrummesse:	flæshes.
wac:	wicke; wittlæs.
wannsenn:	cwelleþþ.
wrecche:	sinnfull.

Of these four have collocations that relate to poverty in context, *allmess*, *nakedd*, *narrwe* and *ned*.

*Allmess* collocates with *dede* and *werkes* which provides the noun for the adjective *allmess* in the context of charitable giving.

*Nakedd* collocates with items that name the range of conditions that alms should relieve in addition to nakedness: imprisonment, homelessness, hunger, sickness and thirst.

*Narrwe* describes the pathway to God, which is not part of the 'poverty' category, but also the crib in which Christ was laid at birth which formed part of the poverty of his circumstances.

*Ned* collocates with 'help' which makes the phrase 'those in need of help' to stand for 'the poor' in this context.<sup>50</sup>

*Wannsenn* and *nibþrenn* collocate with *cwelleþþ* in their senses of being brought low and lessened.

*Wac* collocates with *wicke* and *wittlæs* in a passage about the evil and stupidity of people, husbands or wives.

*Meoc* collocates with *æddmode*, *bliþe*, *herrsumm*, *milde* and *softe*. which are attributes of those who are examples of the quality of 'meekness'. While these are not attributes of the poor they could be argued to be attributes of those who have chosen voluntary poverty for Christ's sake.

The final two items, *unntrummesse*, which collocates with 'flesh' and *wrecche* which collocates with 'sinfull' echo connotations which appear in other textual contexts, such as the AB texts, where items such as *wrecche* have connections with the fleshly frailty and wickedness of man.

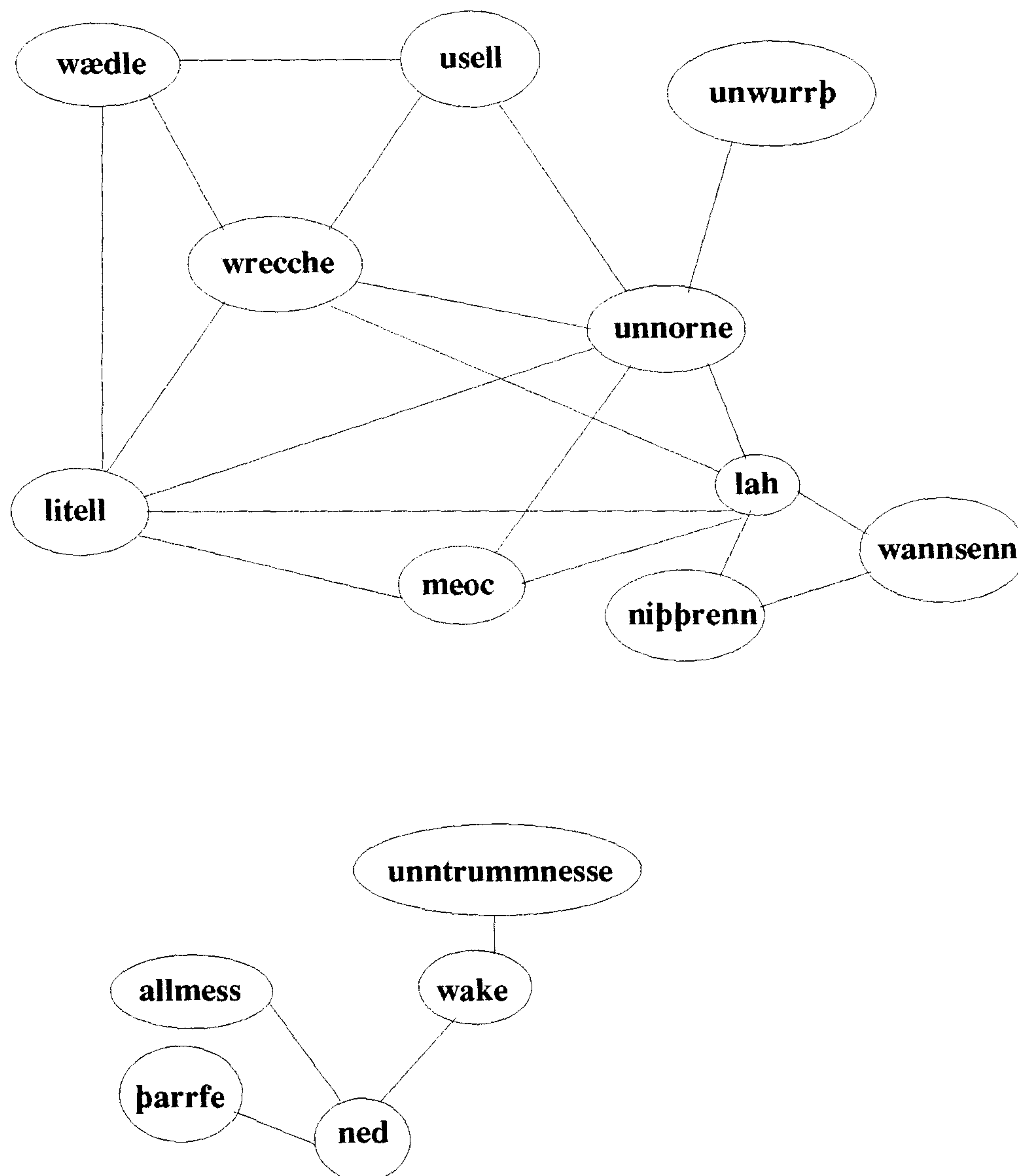
### **Collocative relationships with items inside the 'poverty' category**

There are fifteen items that collocate with other items within the 'poverty' category.

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<sup>50</sup> I have not included *hellpe* as part of the 'poverty' category for the same reason that I have not included the instances of *ned* or *parrfe* which is that their sense is defined by the object and so in themselves they do not carry the context of poverty.

A map of the collocative relationships within the category:



The collocative relationships fall into two distinct groups. The central items, *wrecche*, *wædle* and possibly *usell* and *unnorne* are together. *Litell* and *lah* are important in the web having five and six connections respectively.

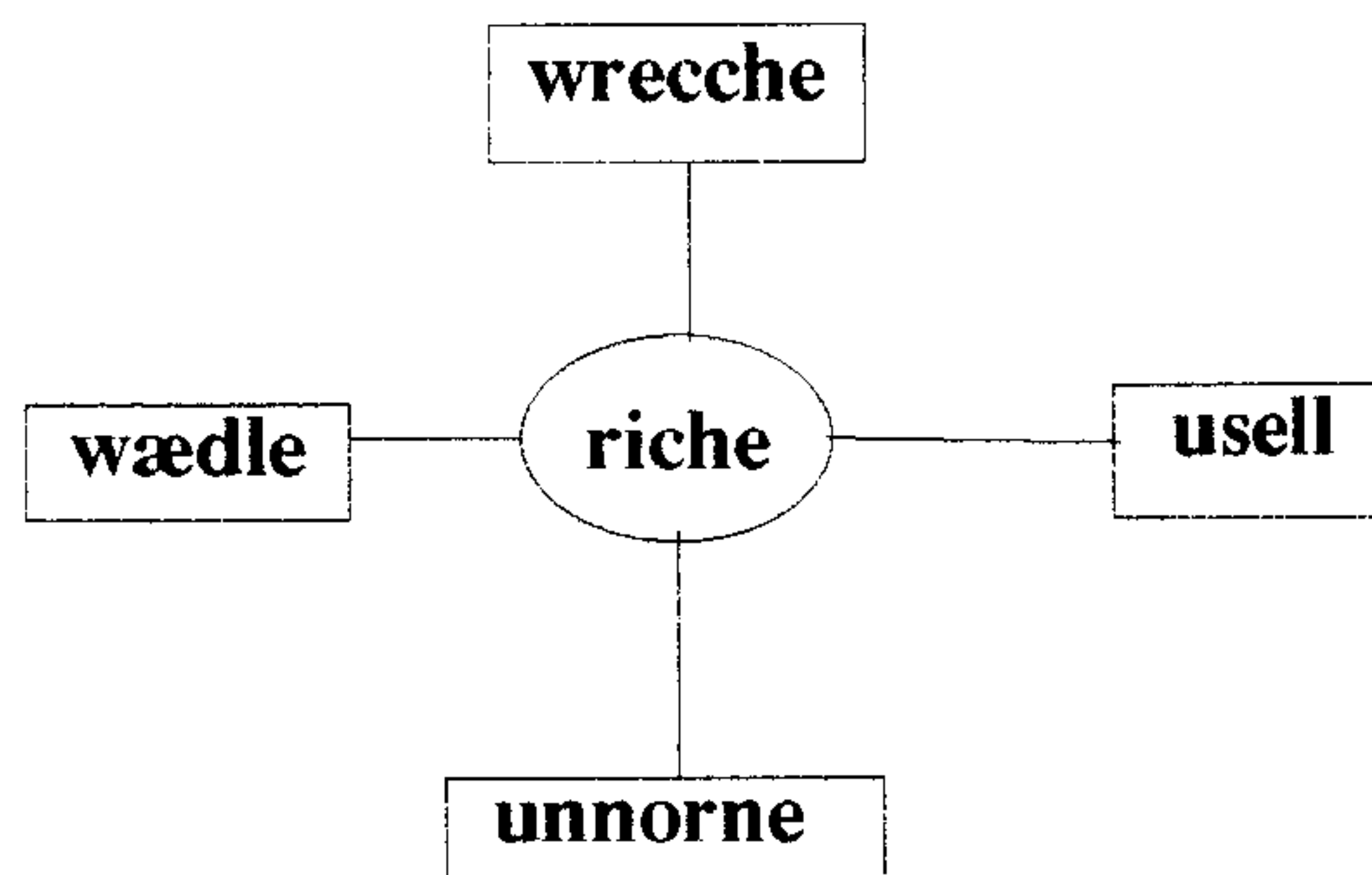
It is surprising that there is not a closer connection between *wrecche* and



*unntrummesse* and *wake* as these three items share the contextual sense 'of the flesh'.

### Antonym

*Riche* is the only antonym that is shared by more than one item from the 'poverty' category:



This could indicate that these four items, *unnorne*, *usell*, *wædle* and *wrecche* are likely to be central to the 'poverty' category in their use in this text as *riche* appears to be a central item in the 'wealthy' category.

The remaining antonyms are:

narrwe - rume

lah - heh

litell - mikell/mare

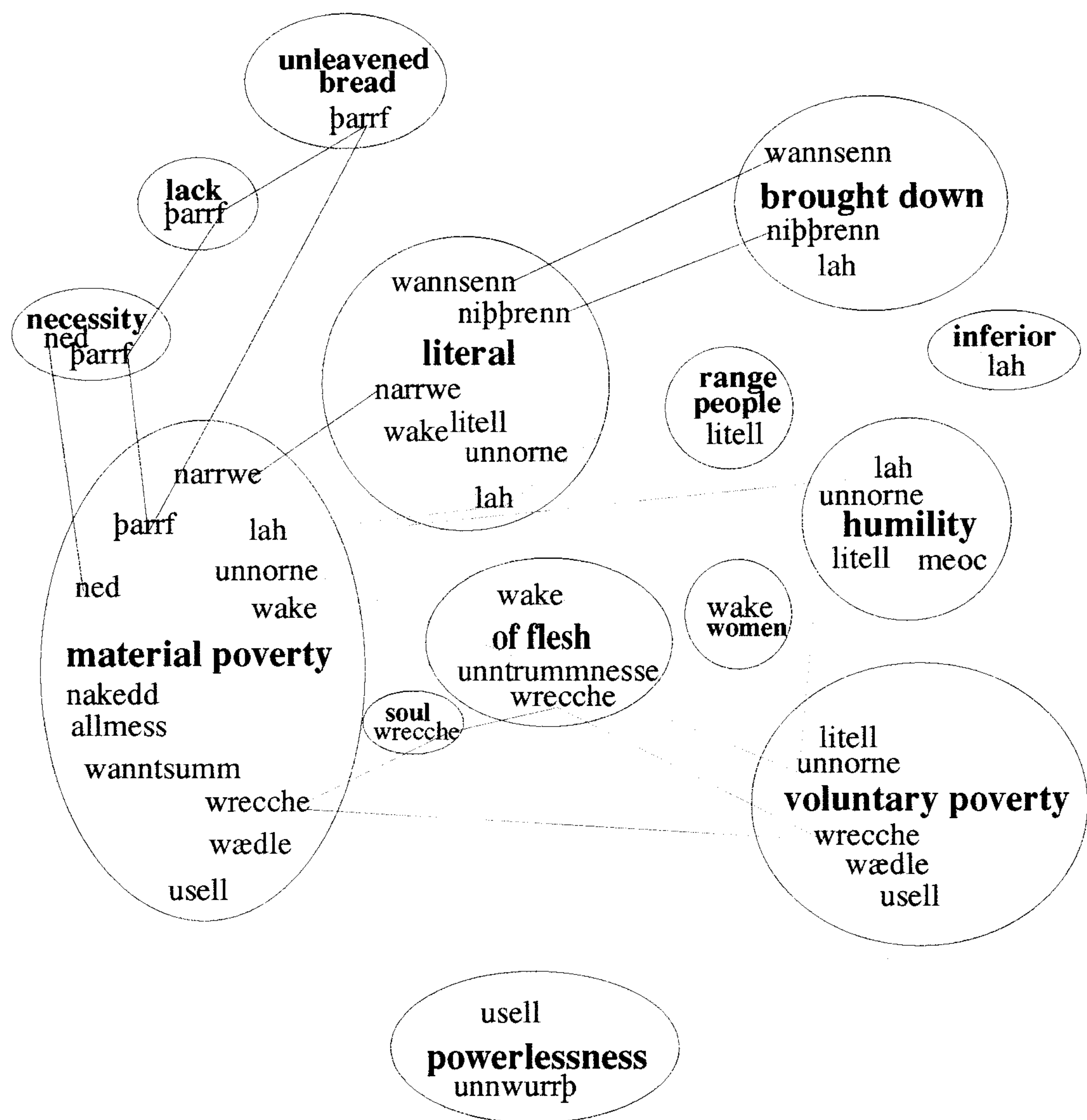
meoc - modi3

nipþrenn - upp; wurrþen

wake - gode

wannsenn - waxenn

A map of the category according to contextual sense



Material poverty seems to be a prototypical centre in this category, with another central sense of voluntary poverty. *Wædle* is restricted to the central areas and does not carry any presence in the associated areas of humility and low status. *Parrf*, the other central item in the OE category, has no presence in the areas of voluntary

poverty and humility but is in the areas of 'necessity' and 'lack' and is being used in the restricted sense of 'unleavened bread'.

The association of words from the 'poverty' category with the nature of 'the flesh' is present.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> A connection Farmer (2002) notes in her work on the poor in Paris.



## 6. Lazamon's *Brut*

### Introduction

Lazamon's *Brut* survives in two manuscripts, both in the British Library, Cotton Caligula A.ix. and Cotton Otho C.xiii. hereafter referred to as MS C and MS O. They are both considered to be derived from a common version which is now lost. MS O was badly damaged in the fire at Ashburnham House in 1731 which has resulted in missing sections. MS O was already considerably briefer than MS C before the fire and was a shortened equivalent to MS C with about three thousand lines omitted. This is achieved through the omission of poetic description and by paraphrase, presenting a plainer and more strictly plot-focused text. MS O is also less archaic in vocabulary, sometimes replacing OE-derived words with French-derived ones and omitting rhetorical and stylistic flourishes. Because of this it was thought that MS C was probably about fifty years earlier than MS O but palaeographical evidence ascribes both to the last half of the thirteenth century.<sup>52</sup> The language is described by Laing (1993) as West Somerset for MS O and North West Worcestershire for MS C. Lazamon himself tells us that he was at Areley Kings, a parish about ten miles from Worcester.

The content is the history of Britain from its foundation by Brutus after his escape from Troy. Lazamon based his work on Wace's *Roman de Brut* with some added material, but work on his sources has suggested that Lazamon was a creative writer using a wide range of other sources from Welsh, French, English and Latin in addition to Wace.<sup>53</sup> It is interesting that although Lazamon was using as a major source Wace's work in French, he appears to use very few French loans. It has been estimated that not more than a hundred French loans appear in both manuscripts (Blake 1992 p. 510).

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<sup>52</sup> Indeed Laing places MS O as the third quarter of the thirteenth century (1993: 79) and MS C later as the last quarter of the thirteenth century (1993: 69).

<sup>53</sup> For a full discussion see the introduction in Allen (1992).

There is a greater number of Scandinavian loan words, Dance suggests that in MS C alone of roughly three thousand two hundred different words, one hundred and forty have a Scandinavian origin (Dance 2002 p. 192-3).

Lazamon's *Brut* is written in an alliterative long line falling into two half line groups which are linked by alliteration or by rhyme or assonance and was intended to be read aloud.<sup>54</sup> It contains many formulaic phrases.

## Individual Words

While in my description I refer to MS O as 'following' the MS C text this is because MS C gives a more lengthy version which appears as if edited and shortened in the MS O text. I am not implying that MS O is a reworking of the MS C text or directly descends from it.

There is no dedicated glossary for Lazamon's *Brut* and the information in the *OED* and *MED* has been supplanted by various translations<sup>55</sup> and my own reading of the texts. Within the poverty material translation can vary considerably and there can be a wide range of possible senses for many of the words in this category, all of which make sense in context. This is particularly true of words such as *wrecche*, *wansiðe* and *ærm* which may have the general sense of 'misery' with or without an element of material deprivation.

Where I have given citations from both manuscripts of the same lines I have placed the line numbers to the side of the text for ease of comparison.

There are twelve items in the category 'poverty' in Lazamon's *Brut*, as identified by my criteria, in the MS C and MS O versions combined, where \* indicates a possible instance.

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<sup>54</sup> For a full assessment of Lazamon's verse form see Allen 2002.

<sup>55</sup> Allen 1993 and Barron and Weinberg 1995.



There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.
6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

#### Items which are part of the *TOE* poverty category

<u>Item</u>	<u>MS O</u>	<u>MS C</u>
<b>ælmesmonne</b>	0	2
<b>erm</b>	1*	30
<b>hæne</b>	1*	19
<b>nakede</b>	5	5
<b>narwe</b>	1	1



<b>neod/fol</b>	60	77 <sup>56</sup>
<b>þurfe</b>	0	2
<b>weaðlen</b>	0	3

**Items which are from Old English but were not part of the *TOE* category:**

<u>Item</u>	<u>MS O</u>	<u>MS C</u>
<b>blæðe</b>	0	5
<b>Ʒeomere</b>	1	10
<b>wansiðe</b>	0	5
<b>wrecche</b>	20+1*	35

**Items which are from Old Norse:**

none

**Items which are from Old French:**

<u>Item</u>	<u>MS O</u>	<u>MS C</u>
<b>pore/poure</b>	6	1

It is striking that there appear to be no items from Norse, and apart from the use of *pore* from Old French the remaining items are all Old English. Indeed only four OE words, and *pore* from OFr, are added to the category, all the other words are from the *TOE* category.<sup>57</sup>

Of these, eight items are common to both MS C and MS O:

<sup>56</sup> *neodfol* does not appear in MS C

<sup>57</sup> It is worth noting though that unlike religious texts, the *Brut* does not have a large focus on poverty.

*erm, zeomere, hæne, nakede, narwe, neod/fol, pore* and *wrecche*.<sup>58</sup>

They do not not necessarily appear in corresponding places as there is considerable discrepancy between the two texts. Some of the discrepancy is because MS O has missing sections through damage to the manuscript, some because MS O paraphrases or omits a passage which includes poverty items in MS C, and some are because either the MS C or the MS O version uses a different item. These discrepancies are considered in detail below. This leads to the question of whether it is reasonable to consider these two manuscripts together. Although the differences in their poverty vocabulary are such that they could be considered as independent texts, I shall consider them together because they are versions the same original work, and the differences in their choice of vocabulary in works from the same source text may shed some light on the similarities and differences in the lexis through time, place and scribal choice.

### **Problems arising from the differences between the two texts**

Only eight of the twelve items are common to both MS C and MS O. Of these some, such as *zeomere* exist in both texts but the instance in MS O would not be identified by the criteria I have set (details below). The poverty vocabulary in MS O is smaller than that in MS C. This is partly because passages that appear in MS C are omitted or paraphrased in MS O.

## **The category in MS O**

### **Items from the *TOE* category**

#### **arme**

This appears only once in line 15792. However MS C has *hærm* and it is possible that MS O intended the same as although *arme* appears it is in a section where the

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<sup>58</sup> This is if *neode* and *neodfol* are taken as the same sense item.

manuscript is damaged. It does not seem to carry the sense 'material poverty'.

### Harm

C15792            for æuere he Ængliscce men. bi-hehte. hærm þene meste.

O                    ... ....(e) he Eanglisse men ... arme gan grete  
for he was always threatening the greatest harm to the English.  
(Welsh king Margadud dissenting with Cadwalan)

Collocation/Antonym

None

### **hene**

This possibly appears once in MS O. This possible instance is in a damaged section but completes a phrase which is also used in MS C at this point.

### Range of people

C13586:            þa riche and þa hene

O                    þe riche and þe he . .

Collocation

None.

Antonym

13586            riche . . .he . .



## **nakede**

This is included because it is part of the *TOE* category. It does not carry the sense 'material poverty'. There are five instances all of which appear in both MSs O and C.

### Metaphoric use

One of these is a metaphorical use, which exists also in OE, of the naked sword meaning unsheathed (345).

### Literal

All four of the remaining instances are literal, in that they describe the physical condition of being without clothing. Two instances refer to the Irish fighting without clothing (9011; 11147). One of the remaining two instances contains a symbolic dimension, as in line 8368 Octa and his knights remove their clothes to beg mercy from Aurelius, and their lack of clothing is a sign of humility and sincerity. In the last instance in line 3127 Pantolaus, who suffered privation at sea during which he was naked, learned from this experience involving privation and material poverty, it is said, so that it led him to create good laws.

### Collocation/Antonym

None.

## **narwe**

There is one instance in MS O and this is not present in MS C which instead has *ærmliche*, another member of the category.

### Hard pressed

In line 4704 Arviragus is described as *narwe bi-pronge* 'hard pressed'. This is not a description of material poverty although it is a description of a restricting situation.

Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **neode**

There are over sixty instances of *neode* in MS O but they are in the sense of general need or compulsion. As in the AB texts it is the item *neod-fol* which carries the sense of 'material poverty'.

### **neod-fol**

#### Material poverty

There is one instance in MS O which refers clearly to 'the needy' where Arthur is describing the benefit to the people if he wins the kingdom of France:

11848                    euerich neod-fol man þe bet sal iworþe

and here MS C has instead *ærmen* which is part of the *TOE* category.

Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **þurfe**

I could find no instances of *þurfe* in MS O. It is included because it is in the *TOE* category. There are only two instances in MS C and in both of these the corresponding lines have been omitted from MS O.

### **weaðlen**

I could find no instances in MS O. It is included because it is in the *TOE* category.

There are only three instances in MS C and in one of these the corresponding lines have been omitted from MS O and in the other two there is an alternative choice, one of which is from the 'poverty' category (*hæne*) and one of which may be an error. This occurs once in line 2929 where MS C has *wædlen*. Wyld (Wyld 1930) considers that in this instance the scribe of MS O did not understand *wædlen* and substituted *wel-donde* in error.

### **Items from OE but not in the *TOE* category**

#### **Ʒeomerede**

There is one instance as a verb. The equivalents of the instances which appear in MS C are missing through damage or paraphrase in MS O. This instance would not on its own be identified by the criteria.

#### Of a sound

It occurs in line 11723 in the description of a battle, *Holle þe helmes Ʒeomerede eorles* in which the verb *Ʒeomerede* refers to the sound made by the warriors.

#### Collocation/Antonym

None

### **wrecche**

This is included because it carries the sense 'material poverty' in the MS O text. There are twenty instances of *wrecche* in MS O.



### Material poverty

Material poverty is a factor in the context of seven.

#### i. The poor

There is a description of the miserable poor, those who congregate for alms at the King's gate, when the spies, sent by the Saxons to see how Uther might be killed, mingle in the disguise of poor men with the *wrecchan* at the King's almsgiving (9803).

#### ii. Poverty with a spiritual component

While it is always difficult, particularly with *wrecche*, to separate the 'wretched' from the 'poor' it is applied to one of Christ's disciples, Peter, who is described *þat was a wrecche fissare* where his poverty and hence low status is, presumably, the foreground sense rather than the more negative connotations the item can carry.

#### iii. The aftermath of battle

The rich and mighty who are robbed of all their possessions by their enemies describe themselves as *wrecche* (9820; 9836) and King Lear as he casts Cordelia out for her lack of love condemns her to live in *wrecche* and *wowe* (1542).

Poverty occurs among civilians in the process of conflict, where the starving inhabitants of Paris as it is besieged by Arthur are *wrecche folk þat lai þar for-hongered* (11758) and here there must also be elements of misery.

Of the remaining instances which carry the sense 'material poverty' one carries the sense also of the lack of status of the poor as Lear reflects on his change in status:

Nou ich ham a wrecche man. ne louep me no man for þan

The aftermath of battle, of defeat, for both individuals and peoples are a prominent source of poverty vocabulary. There are five instances where *wrecche* is used of the defeated. These echo the descriptions of the rich and powerful who lose their possessions as cited above. The loss of his kingdom is made as a threat to Edwin by Cadwalan *and he sal worþe wrecche* (15130) and Childrich threatens to take the horses and weapons of his enemies so they will retreat to their ships *so hii solle wrecches to hire scipes wende* (10422). However, the defeated need not lose all their possessions, they need only be defeated to be described as *wrecche* as when they are begging for mercy (11595) or are indeed spared, here by Arthur (10427). For the ruler who is defeated but captured alive there is the threat of being kept in bonds until they die as Octa threatens Uther *and hold þane wrech[e] forte he for-worþi* (9729).<sup>59</sup>

In two instances the benefits brought by a great leader so that war can be a transformation of men's fortunes for the better is illustrated by the description of the followers of Brutus, who had no follower so *wrecche* that he did not have gold and fine clothes when they were winning booty (650). In the Britain of Arthur no subject however *wrecche* failed to be enriched by their King (11336). In the main the state of being *wrecche* brought with it low status, however, being scorned and treated with contempt (1584).

The juxtaposition of *riche* and *wrecche* as an antonymic pair is a common one in early Middle English texts. In MS O it occurs four times, in lines 1283 *þe riche he makede wrecches*; 1308 *þe riche and wrecches*; 2959 *mani wrecche (sone) iworþe riche* and 3268 *wose hadde richedom he hi(ne make)de wrecche*.

<sup>59</sup> Being kept in bonds attracts other items in the poverty category, for example in MS C *narwe* and *ærm*.

### Collocation

1542	wonie wrecche . . . wonie in wowe
9803	on-hole and a-mang þan wrecchen

### Antonym

1283	riche . . . wrecches
1308	riche . . . wrecches
2959	wrecche . . . riche
3268	richedom . . . wrecche
4530	wrecche . . . hehest (of all men)
9834-6	riche . . wrecches

### Items from OFr.

#### pore

There are six instances of *pore* in MS O whereas there is only one in MS C.

#### Material poverty

##### i. Of 'the poor'

One instance is of the disguise adopted by the spies the Saxons sent to Uther *in pore men guyse* (9800) where MS C has *almes-monnes*.

##### ii. As the low point in the range of people

Two instances are used to express the whole range of men, using the phrase *þe pore and þe riche* (5676); *riche and pore* (11335).



### iii. As the aftermath of conflict

Two instances are used of the aftermath of conflict for the losers, where Melga and Wanis made their way *and pore lond makede* (6056) and the heathen *pore vs habbeþ imaked* (11057).

### To express pity

The last instance is unusual in that MS O has an adjective where MS C has no description, whereas it is more often the case that MS O misses descriptive words or passages that are present in MS C. In line 7695 *þe pore king Vortiger* is an extension of the concrete sense of 'poor' and is sense 6 in the OED with this instance as the earliest citation.<sup>60</sup>

### Collocation

9800                      pore . . . on-hole . . . wrecchen

### Antonym

5676                      pore . . . riche

11335                      riche . . . pore

### Summary

There are two central items in the 'poverty' category in MS O. These are *wrecche* with twenty instances, plus one probable, and *pore* with six instances. Both these have *riche* as an antonym and carry the sense 'material poverty'. *Pore* is used in an extended sense to express pity, which is the first extant recorded use in this sense according to the OED. It is an interesting use as had *wrecche* been used in the same context its

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<sup>60</sup> 6. Such, or so circumstanced, as to excite one's compassion or pity; unfortunate, hapless.

connotations would not have been so positive.

Two other items appear to express 'material poverty'. *Hene* has one possible instance although in a damaged section. It is in the phrase *þe riche and þe he . .* where MS C has the same phrase. If this is an instance it would have *riche* as an antonym. The other is *neod-fol* of which there is one instance. This compound does not appear in MS C and here it has the sense 'materially poor'. MS C has *ærmæn* at this point. This compound is found in the AB texts where it carries the same sense.

There is one possible instance of *arme*, which occurs where MS C has *harne* but all the other items do not carry any sense from the 'poverty' category. *Nakede* is used only in its literal sense as is *narwe* and *zeomerede* in its use in MS O refers to a sound in battle.

## The category in MS C

### Items from the *TOE* category

#### **almes-monne**

This is included because it carries the sense 'material poverty' in context, in translations and dictionaries and because it is part of the *TOE* category. There are two instances.

#### Material poverty

Both are describing those in a state of material poverty, such that they attend the king's almsgivings. Both are also concerned with deception. Both occur when the Saxons send spies to Uther disguised as *almes-monnes* with the intention of killing him. They mingle with those who are seeking alms from the king (9800; 9811).

#### Collocation

9800	almes-monnes wisen . . .vn-hale. . .wracchen.
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Antonym

This is more a contrast than an antonym

9811                    ælmes-monnes claðes . . .cnihtes for-cuðest

**ærm**

This is included because it carries the sense 'material poverty' in context, translations and dictionaries and is also part of the *TOE* category. There are thirty instances. There is also an instance in which MS O has *arme* and MS C has *hærm* which is not included here. Spelling is almost always *ærm*- although there is also *erm[ð]en* (45) and *armliche* (298).

Both the *OED* and the *MED* definitions are around poverty, neediness and misery and in context these can be very difficult to differentiate. The context is often that of battle, the threat of battle or its aftermath, but within that there can be smaller distinctions.

### Material poverty

The clearest example in MS C of *ærm* carrying the sense 'materially poor' is *auere-ælcche ærmen mon. þe æð scal iwurðen* (11848) in which Arthur says that every poor man will benefit if he wins the kingdom of France.<sup>61</sup> The other instances in which there may be an element of material poverty or deprivation are all more directly connected with the experience of war and usually for those not directly involved as warriors in the fighting. . This can involve extreme material suffering and privation as in the conflict between Arthur and Childric aided by Colgrim, when:

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<sup>61</sup> This seems reinforced by MS O's choice of *neod-fol* for MS C's *ærmen* here.



Pa wes Ænglene lond, mid ærmþe of-fulled  
 her wes wop 7 her wes rop, and reouðn vniuoðe  
 muchel hunger 7 hæte. at æuer-ælche monnes 3ete  
 Then there was misery throughout England; here was  
 weeping and lamentation, and widespread grief, much  
 famine and distress at every man's gate.

10197

Here *ærmþe* refers to a general condition which includes material privation and misery. Good kings can wreak the same havoc, as Arthur does in Ireland and *ærmþen* is used of this too (11140). Sometimes this refers to people who are surviving after a conflict such as the people living in the woods after Hengist had killed their leaders (8056), and the Scots and their women and children after Arthur had invaded (10904; 10913; 10922).

#### Warriors suffering in battle and its aftermath

The state of being *ærm* for warriors in battle or its immediate aftermath can be emotional and also physical. After Uther triumphs in battle the remnants of Octa's army flee, dragging their entrails and are described as *uolken hit wes ærmest* (9207) and when Arthur attacks Childrich's men they are *folken alre ærmest* (10605). This connection of *ærm* with those defeated in battle can be used as a prediction as in the old woman's prediction of Bedevere's meeting with the giant *and 3if þu ært eorðlic cniht. ærm þu iwurðest forð-riht* (12914).

#### Imprisonment and being in bonds

As with *narwe*, *ærm* is used in the context of being in imprisonment, and more specifically in bonds. This experience is described of Antigonus as in *ærmliche*

*benden* (298).<sup>62</sup> Anacletus is said to have escaped his bonds *mid ærmþen* (362) The situation of being hard pressed, or in a tight corner, is described as it is of Arviragus as *ærmliche biþrunge* (4704).<sup>63</sup> This is not carrying the sense of material poverty but as with the use of *narwe*, which is another item from the poverty category, the sense is that of being constrained either physically or by circumstance.

### Emotional suffering

There are two instances in which *ærm* is used of a purely emotional state such as *þa wes Argal þe king. ærm on his mode* (3294), and where Childric talks of suing Arthur for peace *wið ærm-liche stefne* (10356).

### The contrast with a previous/kingly state

There are two instances in which *ærm* is collocated and contrasted with the state of kingship. Penda asks permission to capture Oswy and *þer makien. ærmest alre kingen* (15762) and it is a contrast used of Agag: *þu hattes Agag þe king. nu þu ært an ærming* (8329).

### Wishing or predicting a downfall

Merlin predicts the downfall of Winchester *Ærm wurðest þu* (14201). There is also one instance in which this is used as a wish *Vo we ȝet a Uortigerne. alre king si he ærmest* (7431).

### Collocation

298	<i>armliche benden</i>
362	<i>mid ærmðen . . . vt of þon benden</i>

<sup>62</sup> MS O has *in stronge bendes*

<sup>63</sup> MS O has *narwe biþrong* here.

7431	king. . . ærmest
10605	ærmest . . . 3eomerest
15594	3eomerest . . . ærmest
15762	ærmest. . . kingen

#### Antonym

8329	king. . . ærming
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#### hæne

There are nineteen instances. This is an item from the *TOE* and has the sense 'material poverty' in MS C. It sometimes describes the condition of a country or a people after their defeat in conflict, and in addition to the element of the material aftermath there is also the context of a loss of power and status that has an element of contempt and scorn.

#### Material poverty

i. The low point in a range of people:

There are eight instances of this, for example:

4898	riche men 7 hæne
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This may not necessarily indicate material poverty but of the eight, seven are contrasted with *riche*<sup>64</sup> and one (5536) with *heze*.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> 4898; 5676; 7082; 9964; 13586; 15318; 15742.

<sup>65</sup> *riche* appears to be moving into the 'material wealth' sense at this period although it still has elements of 'powerful', see individual words chapter.



ii. The aftermath of battle or conflict

There are five instances which involve the material privation that results from defeat. One (6055) is of land made desolate; two describe the fate of the followers of defeated leaders (7685; 11057); and two are threats from Cadwalan first to Edwin (15130) and later to Oswy (15789) which are both predominantly threats to a rival leader of loss of power and status through defeat.

Contempt

The use of *hæne* with the verb *halden* seems to imply the element of 'contempt' rather than 'material poverty'. There are four instances of this, plus one which seems to have the same sense but is used with the verb '*iwurðen* (8377)<sup>66</sup> and which describes the fate of the heathen religion rather than a person. The instance at line 1584 is Lear's perception of Cordelia's opinion of him:

for heo me for-huste. 7 heo hold me for hæne.<sup>67</sup>

C1584

The other three are of how Christians are viewed at court as opposed to heathens (7205), Lucius' view of Arthur's intent towards the inhabitants of Rome and its nations (13679) and Brian's words to Cadwalan of their situation (15117).

There is one further instance of the use of *hæne* which is more difficult but which may include an element of contempt. This is at line 8888 where the doctor deserts Aurelius' court when he is ill. Allen keeps the overtones of contempt in her translation as 'leaving us like idiots' where Barron and Weinberg give 'leaving us in sore need.' This illustrates the difficulty of pinning a precision on the sense of some of these

<sup>66</sup> But in 7685 *his hired mid him þe hæne wes iwurðen* may not contain the element of contempt, where Allen translates it as 'depleted' and Barron and Weinberg as 'destitute'.

<sup>67</sup> MS O has *wrecche* here.

'poverty' words, where both translations make sense in context although out of context they appear very different to each other.

#### Collocation

None.

#### Antonym

Eight instances of *riche . . . hæne*

4898; 5676 (*hæhne*); 7082; 9964; 13586 (*hene*); 13679 (*hænen*); 15318; 15742.

Two instances of *heze . . . hæne*

5535; 15117.

One instance of *hæhst . . . hæne*

7204-5

#### **nakede**

All the five instances occur in both MS O and MS C in the same contexts although with slight rewording. This item is included because it is part of the *TOE* category but here it does not carry the sense 'material poverty'.

#### Metaphoric

One instance is a metaphorical use, which exists also in OE, of the naked sword meaning unsheathed (345).

### Literal

All four of the remaining instances are literal, in that they describe the physical condition of being without clothing. Two instances refer to the Irish fighting without clothing (9011; 11147). One of the remaining two instances contains a symbolic dimension in line 8368 where Octa and his knights remove their clothes to beg mercy from Aurelius, and their lack of clothing is a sign of humility and sincerity. In the last instance in line 3127 Pantolaus who suffered privation at sea during which he was naked, learned from this experience involving privation and material poverty, it is said, so that it led him to create good laws.

### Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **narwe**

This does not carry the sense 'material poverty' and is included because it was part of the *TOE* category. There is one instance in MS C.

### Of imprisonment

This describes the fate of the Britons taken alive by Evander and *narwe ibunden* (13483).

### Collocation/Antonym

None.

### **neode**

There are many instances of *neode* in MS C, and they are in the general sense



'necessity' or 'need' but with no connotations of material poverty except one.

### Material poverty

There is one instance of *neode* that refers to the poor who are fed at the King's gate:

15357            þe king lette feden alle   þa neode hafden.  
                     alle þe blæðe

It is interesting here that the phrase echoes the same phrase which occurs in the *TOE* category, but it is the context that provides the sense 'material poverty' and our encyclopedic knowledge of the condition of those that are fed by the King..

### Collocation

15357            neode hafden . . . blæðe

### Antonym

None.

### **þurfe**

There are two instances, neither of which carry the sense 'material poverty'. This is included because it is part of the *TOE* category.

### 'To need to'

In MS C it carries the sense 'to need' as:

ne þurfe we nu nauer-mare. iseon

we need never more see

4173

Ne þurfen 3e nauere rehchen

You need not be much concerned

9003

Collocation/Antonym

None.

**weaðlen/wædlen**

There are three instances, all of which are concerned with material poverty

Material poverty

Two of the instances are used to illustrate the range of people, *þa weolezen 7 þa weaðlen* (215) and *riche men 7 weðlen* (250). The remaining instance refers to the booty that can be won in warfare, said by Belin and Brenne when sending men to fight the Romans:

for her scullen þe wædlen. alle i-wurðen riche.

for here the poor shall all become rich men

2929

Collocation

None.

## Antonym

215	<i>weolezen . . . weaðlen</i>
250	<i>riche . . . weðlen</i>
2929	<i>wædlen . . . riche</i>

## Items from OE but not in the *TOE* category

### **blæðe**

There are five instances, all in MS C.

### Material poverty

The needy who come to be fed by the king are described as *blæðe* when Brien joins them, and again here these poor are used as a disguise for getting close to the magician, Pelluz, to kill him (15358).

### The aftermath of battle

Three instances are in the context of the aftermath of battle, of towns (4951), kings (9350) and also of women, who become *ble<ð>ere widewe* (1190). These include the element of material deprivation that is a result of defeat.

The defeated who sue for mercy, here Octa the son of Hengist, remove most of their clothing and are described as *blaðe þeines* (8365).

## Collocation

1189	<i>ble&lt;ð&gt;e widewe</i>
15357-8	<i>þa neode hafden . . . alle þe blæðe</i>



Antonym

None.

### **Ʒeomere**

There are ten instances. There is a single instance of the verb *Ʒeomeren*, which the MED defines as 'To cry out in sorrow, wail, lament; also, groan in grief or pain' (11723). This, the only instance that appears in both MS C and MS O, would not have been picked up by my criteria had it been the sole instance. *Ʒeomere* is included because it collocates with *ærm* (10605; 15594) in MS C.

### Material poverty

There is one instance that seems connected to material poverty and it is not part of the aftermath of battle. This concerns the famine that occurred under Cadwalader, who was a good king but in his reign crops failed and people could not buy bread:

an burƷe and on londe.^ leoden weoren Ʒeoumere.

no nan uolk on londe.^ þat of-fingred nes sære.

In town and countryside the people were miserable;

there was no one in the land who was not sorely famished.

15875

*Ʒeoumere* here does not mean 'material poverty' but it is describing the condition of those who are suffering from it.

### Warriors suffering in battle

There are two instances that both describe the condition of people who are in battle and which collocate with *ærm*. When Arthur is attacking Childrich's men after their treachery they are described as:

þer weoren Sæxisce men. folken alre ærmest  
7 þa Alemainisce men. 3eomerest alre leoden  
Then the Saxons were the most wretched of all peoples,  
and the Germans the most miserable of all nations.

10605

and when Edwin is being attacked by Cadwalan:

þer wes Edwines ferde. 3eoumerest alre uolke.  
7 Edwine him-seolf anan. ærmest alre kingen.  
Edwin's army were then the most despondent of men,  
and Edwin himself at once the most miserable of kings.

15594

Those who are set to flight after a battle are also described as *alre 3eomerest folke* (15475) and in a sense of general 'distress' or 'misery' the ships tossing in a storm at sea are described as *3emere* (6007).

### Imprisonment after defeat

Hengist is captured by Earl Adolf and was seized and bound. He is then described as *cnihten alre 3eomerest* although there does not seem to be the same connection

between *zeoumere* and the bonds themselves that there seems to be between *narwe* and *earm* and the bonds.

#### Of a voice

The act of crying aloud in battle is expressed by the verb *zeomeren* (11723), and Bedevere finds the old woman by the giant's fire crying out in a *zeomere stefne* (12903).

#### Unpleasant connotations

Cador suggests to Arthur that if the Romans are to invade they should prepare some *zeomere spelles* for them (12447). This is less easy to translate but appears to be in the context of hostility and threat.<sup>68</sup> There is an instance of 'may he be accursed' *monnen wurðe him zeomerest* (15791).

#### Collocation

10605	ærmest . . . zeomerest
15594	zeoumerest . . . ærmest

#### Antonym

None.

#### **wansiðe**

There are five instances, only one of which appears in the context of material poverty. The sense given in the OED is concerned with general 'misery' and the MED has the same, with anxiety and distress.<sup>69</sup> This is included because of its collocation with

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<sup>68</sup> Allen has 'dire messages' and Barron and Weinberg give 'unpleasant greetings'.

<sup>69</sup> This sense is shown in MS O which has *wowe* where MS C has *was-siðe*.



*warchen* in one instance.

### Material poverty

King Lear talking to Cordelia after he has banished her says:

ah mine dohtren ich wlle delen mine riche.

7 þu scalt worðen warchen. 7 wonien in wansiðe

I will divide my realm among my other daughters, and you  
shall become destitute and live in misery

1542

The difficulty of drawing clear distinctions in such items which cover a range of misery and can include elements of material deprivation is illustrated here, as Barron and Weinberg translate *7 þu scalt worðen warchen. 7 wonien in wansiðe* as 'you shall become destitute and live in misery' while Allen gives 'you are to be worthless and wallow in wretchedness'.

### Misery/hardship

None of the other four instances appear to contain any collocation with items which have a primary sense of material deprivation although they all refer to situations in which material deprivation is likely to be a factor. The experience of men suffering at sea in winter is described as *heo þoleden wen-siðes* (53). There are two references to battle, in the first Brutus attacks the unsuspecting Greeks who were unaware of their *wensiðe* where there appears to be an element of 'danger' or 'peril' (271). In the battle between Brutus and the Greeks the shifting fortunes of war for the individual fighters are described as *wensiðes* (288). In the final instance *wansiðes* is used to describe their sufferings under the Emperor of Rome, Maxenz, by the powerful citizens who are

appealing to Constantine for help in their revenge (5547).

#### Collocation

1542                      warchen . . . wansiðe

#### Antonym

None.

#### **wrecche**

There are thirty five instances in MS C. This is not part of the *TOE* category but becomes a central item in the category in early middle English and has the sense 'material poverty' in the MS C text.

#### Material poverty

##### i. The poor

There are five instances which are used of the poor who gather to receive alms. The spies sent in disguise by Uther mingle with the *wracchen* at the King's almsgiving (9804). Brien disguises himself as a pilgrim and attends Edwin's court where the poor are fed where he meets his sister, Galarne and in this passage the poor, with whom Brien mingles, are described as *wrecche monnen* (15361) and he is disguised *on wræcches monnes liche* (15374) which presumably means that this description includes pilgrims, as it is as a pilgrim that he is disguised. Brien and his sister talk, and she is seated *ymong þan wrecche uolke* between two widows, who are also part of this group who qualify for alms (15384-5). In the last instance Brien's sister addresses him as *wrecche* when she gives him gold (15378).

ii. Treatment of the poor as a measure of Kingship

The King's generosity towards the poor, in the form of gathering them together to distribute alms, ironically provides an opportunity for his enemies to get close to him in disguise. Treatment of the poor is one of the measures of kingship and there are four instances of the King's treatment of the *wrecche* in this context and one of the rich made *wrecche*. The poisoned Aurelian speaks of Uther, who will succeed him, asking God to make him a good king which includes:

wærcche uolke for fæder hænen to frouere.

to the poor a father, to the needy a protector

8896

which is part of a definition of a good king. However King Gracien is not a good king to rich or poor:

þa leoden him weren laðe.

þa riche he for-uerde. þa wræcche he drof of ærde.

He hated the people.; he destroyed the rich,

the poor he drove from the land.

6110

He is a contrast to his son, Ebrauc, who honoured all his folk both *richen* 7 *wrecchen*. He allowed the *riche* to be in peace and the *wrecches* to have all they required.



Menbriz is a wicked King and he also treats all his subjects badly:

þa riche he made wreccas þa hæne hine awarieden  
the rich he made poor, the lowly cursed him

1283

Argal is the most wicked man to rule a kingdom, but his treatment of the poor is not mentioned, although he made all the rich poor: *what-se hæfde richedom he hine made wræcchemon* (3268).<sup>70</sup>

ii. Poverty with a spiritual context

The Christian paradox of the poor as the lowest of men being exalted to the highest by the Holy Spirit is expressed by the contrast of *wrecche* and *hehst* about Christ's apostle Peter:

al-swa he dude Peture. þe wes a wræche fiscære  
þe made hine an mancunne. hehst of alre manne.  
as he (the Holy Spirit) did to Peter, who was a poor fisherman  
and was made the highest of all mortal men<sup>71</sup>

4530

iii. As part of or as the aftermath of conflict

a. The general population

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<sup>70</sup> The contrasting pairs *riche* and *wrecche* here is a common one in early Middle English and is a sound pattern which is lost when *poure* becomes the dominant expression and *wrecche* loses its 'poverty' sense.

<sup>71</sup> The multiple layers of meaning in *wrecche* could equally well be expressed by 'humble' instead of 'poor' in this context.

When Arthur lays siege to Paris the fate of the inhabitants is that of extreme material privation, they are starving and in distress. They are described twice as *wrecche* (11758, 11763). While suffering in and of itself in conflict is described as *wrecche* (see below) these two instances seem to be in a context which contains material deprivation as a major strand.

b. The rich becoming materially impoverished

The first two instances are a part of the deception practised by Childric's men to gain admittance to Uther's court. In the first the conspirators describe themselves as *wrecche men* who were wealthy until the Saxons took their possessions from them (9820), and this description, that the men are now *for wracchen i-halden* (9837) is repeated to Uther by his knight and they are then admitted to court. After Arthur defeats Childric he allows his followers to escape by boat but deprives them of their horses and weapons, leaving them *wrecches* (10422).

Losing wealth is an aftermath of defeat and the Trojans leave with the wealth of the defeated Greeks whom they leave as *wrecches* (503). The Trojans make the general comment that the *riche* have room to get ahead of the *wreccan* (505).

c. The poor becoming enriched

There are four instances of the *wrecche* being, or being promised to be, enriched by conflict. Brutus had no follower so *wrecche* that he did not have gold and fine clothes from the booty that was won (650). When Belin was conquering Rome:

Per wes moni wrehche. sone iworden riche,

There many a poor man was instantly enriched

2959

When Julius Caesar wanted the French to help him conquer the Britons he promised them he would *þe wræcchen makien richen* if they would help him.

After his victory against Rumareth, King of Wendland, people come from countries far and wide to bow down before Arthur, and:

Al þat Arður isæh. al hit him to bæh.

riche men and pouere. swa þe hazel ualleð.

nes þer nan swa wræcche Brut. þat he nes awæljed.

All that Arthur saw, bowed down to him, rich and poor

as the hail falls, there was no Briton so poor/wretched

that he was not enriched.

11334

The translation here is interesting. This is the sole use of *pouere* in MS C and the phrase *riche . . . poure* is used here, as in MS O, to describe the opposite ends of the social range with the sense 'all men'. *Wrecche* here is contrasted with *awæljed* from *a-welezen* 'to make rich' in a material sense. It seems that here that *pouere* and *wrecche* are useful to express material poverty, the former as an attribute of being at the lowest of the social spectrum, and the latter as an expression of material poverty as a material lack.<sup>72</sup>

### Suffering in conflict

There are three examples of the soldiers in battle being described as *wrecche* and in each of these they are the survivors. Cunedagius defeated Morgan and killed all his followers except the *wræcche* who escaped alive (1927). When Gurmund devastated

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<sup>72</sup> At the same time the negative connotations of *wrecche* could bring the sense that being *awæljed* may possibly involve some ennoblement as well.



Britain the *wræcche folc* left who were able, fled the country (14544). The lives of those who survive defeat are described as *wracche* as when Arthur defeats the Norwegians and those who remain alive ask his mercy (11595).

Suffering in conflict is not confined to the combatants. When Ursule and the women attempted to flee by sea they were caught and described as *swa wræcchelichen atozene* 'wretchedly ill-treated' on their capture (6035). Potential victims of conflict are also described as *wræcche* as are the French people in Arthur's plea to the Romans not to invade France (13109).

When the heathens, Melga and Wanis, invaded Britain and conquered the northern part of the country Archbishop Guencelin asked for help from King Aldroein as the Romans had deserted them. He feared that in those circumstances the remaining Britons would be no more than *wrecches* (6365). This is not specifically suffering in conflict itself, but the condition of the people in a country in times of conflict.

### Contempt

There are four instances which seem to carry the overtone of 'contempt'. Octa speaking of his intention to capture Uther describes how he will hold him as a *wræcche* in bonds (9729). This turned out otherwise than Octa expected, as did the situation when Gillomar saw Uther's vanguard approaching and told his followers:

Ne þurfen 3e nauere rehchen. þah 3e slæn þa wrecchen.

You need not be at all bothered if you slay the wretches

9003

when he assumed Uther was suing for peace. The description of the defeated (or soon to be defeated) as *wrecchen* is used by Arthur when he lets Childric's men go free

(10428)<sup>73</sup>, and it is interesting that in common with the two previous instances Arthur is misguided as Childric later invades.

The last instance is less contempt than an expression of lowliness - the lowest in rank - and occurs when Uther has gone in disguise to lie with Ygerne and his followers think he has deserted them. They besiege Gorlois' castle and win despite their lack of leadership. They fight so well that it is said:

næs þer nan swa wracche swein. þat he nes a wel god þein<sup>74</sup>

there was no common soldier so menial that he was not an  
excellent warrior

9559

#### Of the soul

Brut is not a religious text and there is little discussion of spiritual things. However *wracche* is used of the soul:

Penne scalt þu for-wurþen. a þissere woruld-riche.

7 þi wracche saule. sizen to helle.

Then you shall be damned in this world, and your wretched soul  
sink down to hell.

7280

This is said to Vortiger who refuses to expel the heathen Saxons despite the

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<sup>73</sup> This is five lines after the use of *wræcchen* which I have included in the 'material poverty' sense when Childric's followers are deprived of their horses and weapons.

<sup>74</sup> This contrast of *swein* and *þein* occurs elsewhere and is like *riche* and *wrecche* a contrast in sense expressed through a similarity in sound.

Britons' requests. The connection between the damned in hell and *wrecche* appears in other texts, and is applied to the souls of the damned.<sup>75</sup>

#### A 'desperate' desire

There is one usage that stands alone in sense:

þa wes he wræccheliche of-lust. after deores flæsce  
he then had a desperate longing for venison

15251

This is of Cadwalan when he is ill and Brian finally cuts off some of his own flesh to feed Cadwalan's *wræccheliche of-lust*. The other instance of this form is *wræcchelichen* at line 6035 where it is used of the ill-treatment meted out to Ursule and the women who fail to escape Conan by sea where there is a strong sense that the treatment the women receive is wicked.

#### Collocation

C. 9800-9804    almes-monnes . . . vn-hale . . . . wracchen

#### Antonym

There are nine instances of *riche* . . . *wrecche* or the reverse:

504, 1283, 1308, 2959, 3268 (*richedom*), 3857, 6111, 9834, 15374

4530            wræche . . . hehst

9559            wrecche swein . . . wel god þein

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<sup>75</sup> see below eg. A Moral Ode Jesus Ox. MS. I. Arch. I.



9835-7                    god-fulle þeines . . . wracchen

### Items from OFr

#### pouere

There is one instance of *pore* which appears to carry the sense 'material poverty' in that it is contrasted with *riche*.

#### Material poverty

This instance

riche men and pouere

11335

is used to describe the lowest of the range of men who all bow down before Arthur. In that sense it could equally be used in the sense 'humble' in that it is contrasted with *riche* which still carries some connotations of 'powerful' even though it is collecting more connotations of 'material wealth'. It is also interesting that in the next line when attention is drawn to the people who were *iw(e)llid* 'enriched' among the lowest of Arthur's subjects, MS C uses the word *wrecche*.

#### Collocation

None.

#### Antonym

11335                    riche . . . pouere

## Summary

MS C has a larger 'poverty' vocabulary than MS O, which is not surprising as it is longer but also many of the items are used adjectivally or in 'scene setting' as opposed to plot, and MS O tends to remove description. There are several items which not only carry the sense 'materially poor' but also refer to the poor who gather at the king's gate for alms. *Ælmes-monne* has the sense 'materially poor' as do *blæðe* and *wrecche* which are both used of the crowds awaiting the distribution of alms. It is interesting that although the compound *neode-fol* does not appear in MS C, *neode* does have one instance in which it has the central sense and it echoes the same phrase in OE: *neode hafden*.

Two items which carry the central sense and have *riche* as an antonym are *hæne* and *weaðlen*. *Weaðlen* appears in the phrase meaning 'everybody' opposed to *weolezen* once and *riche* once. *Pourre* occurs once in MS C when it is in a similar phrase with *riche* and it is tempting to think that this formulaic use was imported wholesale while its use as a separate item in its own right did not sit so easily. An alternative possibility is that if it is the case that the MS C scribe was deliberately using archaic language, the relatively new loan word from French slipped by in a formula where it would not have done so as an individual word.

There are three items which do not express the central sense but are in close context with it, these are *ærm*, *zeomere* and *wansiðe*.

The remaining items do not carry any sense of 'poverty' or its close collocative senses, *nakede* is used in its literal sense and *narwe* is used literally or figuratively of imprisonment.

It is ironic that the poor who gather at the king's gate are in the text because on both occasions they provide cover and a means by which an assassin can reach their target.

## A comparison between MS O and MS C

### Items from the *TOE* category

#### **ælmesmonne**

This appears twice in MS C but not at all in MS O. In the first instance MS O uses a different item:

9800:

MS C                    an almes-mottes wisen

MS O                    in pore men guyse

whereas in the second instance in line 9810 the paraphrase in MS O does not include description so the phrase is not present. Interestingly both instances concern men using the disguise of *almes/pore* men to do evil.

#### Collocation

C. 9800-9804     *almes-mottes . . . vn-hale . . . . wracchen*

#### **erm**

There are thirty one instances in which either MS C or MS O use this item. In none of these do MS C and MS O coincide. MS C alone uses it in thirty instances and MS O alone uses it in one.

In two instances the MS O manuscript has the section missing through damage (lines 45; 15177). Of these line 15177 could include the item:

C15177            feollen ærm kempes



O folle ....e cnihtes  
 779 ill-fated warriors fell

In fifteen places where MS C has *erm* MS O has chosen to omit or paraphrase in such a way that the lines are either missing altogether or reworked in such a way that the language is less descriptive<sup>76</sup> for example:

C9219 heo weoren amærȝe. volken alre ærmest  
 O and þaie were amorwe. alle idon to deape  
 475 by morning they were the most wretched of men/they were all killed

Of the remaining fourteen instances, thirteen are in MS C where MS O gives an alternative item and one is in MS O where MS C gives an alternative. The nature of the alternatives are:

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
298	armliche	stronge	(of bonds)
3294	ærm	sori	(on his mode)
4704	ærmliche	narwe	(of bonds)
7431	ærmest	harmes	(of Aruiragus)
8100	ærme	wowe	(of Vortiger)
10197	ærmþe	harne	(of England)
10356	ærm-liche	cwickere	(of a voice)
11140	ærmþen	harm	(of Arthur's deeds)

<sup>76</sup> lines: 362; 525; 8056; 8177; 8271; 8329; 9207; 9219; 10315; 10329; 10605; 10904; 10913; 10922; 13834)

11848	ærmen	neod-fol	(of men)
12914	ærm	harm	(a threat)
14201	Ærm	wo	(Merlin's curse)
15730	ærmðen	harm	(of attacking Oswy)
15762	ærmest	harmest	(of Oswy)
15792	hærme	arme	(threat to the English)

Seven of these alternative choices give the item *harm/hærm* as the alternative to *erm*, which includes the only time MS O has *erm* and MS C gives an alternative.

### **hæne**

There are nineteen instances in MS C of which one is probably present in MS O. This is:

C13586	þa uatte 7 þa lene. þa riche and þa hene
O	þæ fatte and .. .... þe riche and þe he..
697-8	the fat and the lean, the great and the humble

where the dots represent letters missing through damage to the manuscript. It seems likely that the text in MS O continues to follow the phrasing of MS C here particularly with the rhyme.

Of the remaining eighteen instances in MS C, three are missing in MS O in sections where the manuscript is damaged (13679; 15117; 15789). Nine are not

present in sections where MS O has a much shortened or paraphrased version of the text as it exists in MS C (04898; 5536; 7205; 7685; 8377; 8888; 9964; 15318; 15742).

The remaining six instances are where MS O uses a different item. These are:

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
1584	hæne	wrecche	Cordelia's view of Lear
5676	hæhne <sup>77</sup>	pore	used as 'all ranks'
6055	hene	pore	the land after war
7082	hæne	pore	used as 'all ranks'
11057	hene	pore	of the dispossessed rich
15130	hene	wrecche	of a king after defeat

### **nakede**

All five instances are present in both MS C and MS O. One is used to signify an unsheathed sword (345) which is a usage that exists also in Old English. Two are describing how the Irish fought naked (9011; 11147). The remaining two instances contain some symbolic overtones, as Octa and his knights take off their clothes and appear naked before Aurelius when they beg mercy and are converted to Christianity (8368), and Pantolaus institutes good laws as a result of his experience of privation at

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<sup>77</sup> This is translated as 'humble' by Allen and as 'low' by Barron and Weinberg and MS O has *pore* and I am taking this as a form for *hæne*



sea when he was left naked (3127).

### **narwe**

There are two instances of this, one in each manuscript. In the first the hard pressed Arviragus is described as *ærmliche biþrunge* in MS C and as *narwe bi-þrong* in MS O (4704). In the second, the Roman and British armies are engaged in battle and many of the British are captured alive and the Romans *narwe heom ibunden* (MS C 13483) or *faste he .. bun(den)* (MS O 13483).

### **neode**

This is a common item in both MS C and MS O but in the sense of general necessity or compulsion. There are two instances in which it appears to form part of the 'poverty' category. One is in MS C (15357) where it is used in close collocation with *blæðe* and less closely associated with *wrecche* to describe the people coming to the king to be fed, but this passage is not present in MS O. The other instance is present only in MS O where *neod-fol* is used where MS C has *ærmen mon* to describe the poor subjects of Arthur who will fare better if he wins the kingdom of France (11848).<sup>78</sup>

### **þurfe**

There are two instances, both in MS C. The lines have been omitted from MS O. Both instances are *þurfe* in its sense of 'to need to do something'.

### **weaðlen**

There are three instances, all of which are from MS C. All of these are expressing material poverty though two are used as an expression of the range of people. One of

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<sup>78</sup> This is similar to the use of *neod-fol* in the AB texts.

the instances is missing in MS O in a section of the manuscript that is damaged (215). The other two instances are expressed by a different item in MS O, one of which is also from the poverty category (250).

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
250	weðlen	hene	the range of people
2929	wædlen	wel-donde	in war poor men
			become rich

### Items from OE but not in the *TOE* category

#### **blæðe**

There are five instances of *blæðe* in MS C but none in MS O. Of these the instances at lines 8365, 11789 and 15358 are omitted in MS O. In the remaining two instances, MS O uses an alternative expression:

4951

MS C            he hæfde imakede blæðe

MS O            he hadde for-fare

9350

MS C            his lond þu forbernest 7 hine blæðe wurchest

MS O            his lond þu for-bearnest and him-selue þretest

In neither of these two instances is the choice made of an alternative lexical item, rather it is a rephrasing.

Collocation

C. 11789	blæðere . . . widewe
C. 15357-8	þa neode hafden . . . þe blæðe

Antonym

none

**zeomere**

There are ten instances in MS C of which two are in MS O. Of the two in MS O one is the single instance of the verb *zeomeren*, which the MED defines as 'To cry out in sorrow, wail, lament; also, groan in grief or pain' (11723) and the other is the ill wishing of Margadud (15791). Of the remaining eight instances five are not present in MS O through the reworking of the text (6007; 8267; 10605; 12447; 15875) and two are missing through damage to the manuscript (15475; 15594). The last instance is in line 12903 where MS O uses *rouliche* as an adjective for *stemne* where MS C has *zeomere*.

**wansiðe**

There are five instances, all of which are found only in MS C. Two are missing in MS O because the lines are omitted (53, 5547), and one is missing where there is damage to the manuscript (289). Of the remaining two instances both have an alternative item in MS O:

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
271	wensiðe	harne	Greeks unsuspecting of attack
542	wansiðe	wowe	Lear banishing Cordelia



wrecche

There are thirty eight instances of which not all are present in both manuscripts.

MS C has thirty five instances, of which sixteen are in MS C alone and nineteen are common with MS O. There are three places where MS O uses *wrecche* and MS C uses an alternative. Two of MS C's alternatives are *hæne/hene* (1584; 15130), which is also in the 'poverty' category, and one is *warchen*.<sup>79</sup>

MS O has twenty instances plus one probable instance (13109).<sup>80</sup> There are three places where the corresponding text in MS C has *wrecche* but where the MS O text is missing through damage, and twelve corresponding places in MS C where the MS O text is paraphrased or shortened in such a way that the item does not appear. There is one instance in which MS C has *wræcchelichen* but MS O has *reuliche* (6035).

There are the following discrepancies:

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
1542	warchen	wrecche	Lear on Cordelia
1584	hæne	wrecche	Cordelia's view of Lear
6035	wræcchelichen	reuliche	treatment of women
15130	hene	wrecche	of defeated

<sup>79</sup> *warchen* probably connected to *werke* 'pain'

<sup>80</sup> C13109 and lete we þat folc wræcche.^ wunien an ære  
O (an). .... .. þat ...ch. folk wonie ..... (where the dots are missing letters).

king

Overall this is a strikingly consistent use between these two manuscripts when compared to the other items in the poverty category, particularly as *wrecche* has not the literal sense, for example, that *nakede* has which accounts for all the mutually consistent instances of that item.

**Items from ON**

None.

**Items from OFr**

**pore**

There are six instances, all of which appear in MS O and one of these also appears in MS C. The instance that appears in both is used to illustrate that all men bowed down before Arthur where MS O has *riche and pore* and MS C has *riche men and pouere* (11335). This is a phrase to express 'everyone' so it could have been used as a unit because *pouere* does not otherwise appear in the vocabulary in MS C at all.

There is one instance in which MS O adds an adjective which is missing in MS C, this expansion in MS O is unusual, where king Vortiger is described as *pore* (7695).

The remaining instances contain different items in MS C, which are:

<u>line number</u>	<u>MS C</u>	<u>MS O</u>	
5676	hæhne	pore	all ranks
6055	hene	pore	land after war
9800	almes-monnes	pore men	disguise as a poor man

11057

hene

pore

rich men

dispossessed

## Discussion

### MS O

#### Collocation

There is very little close collocation in the poverty vocabulary in the MS O text.

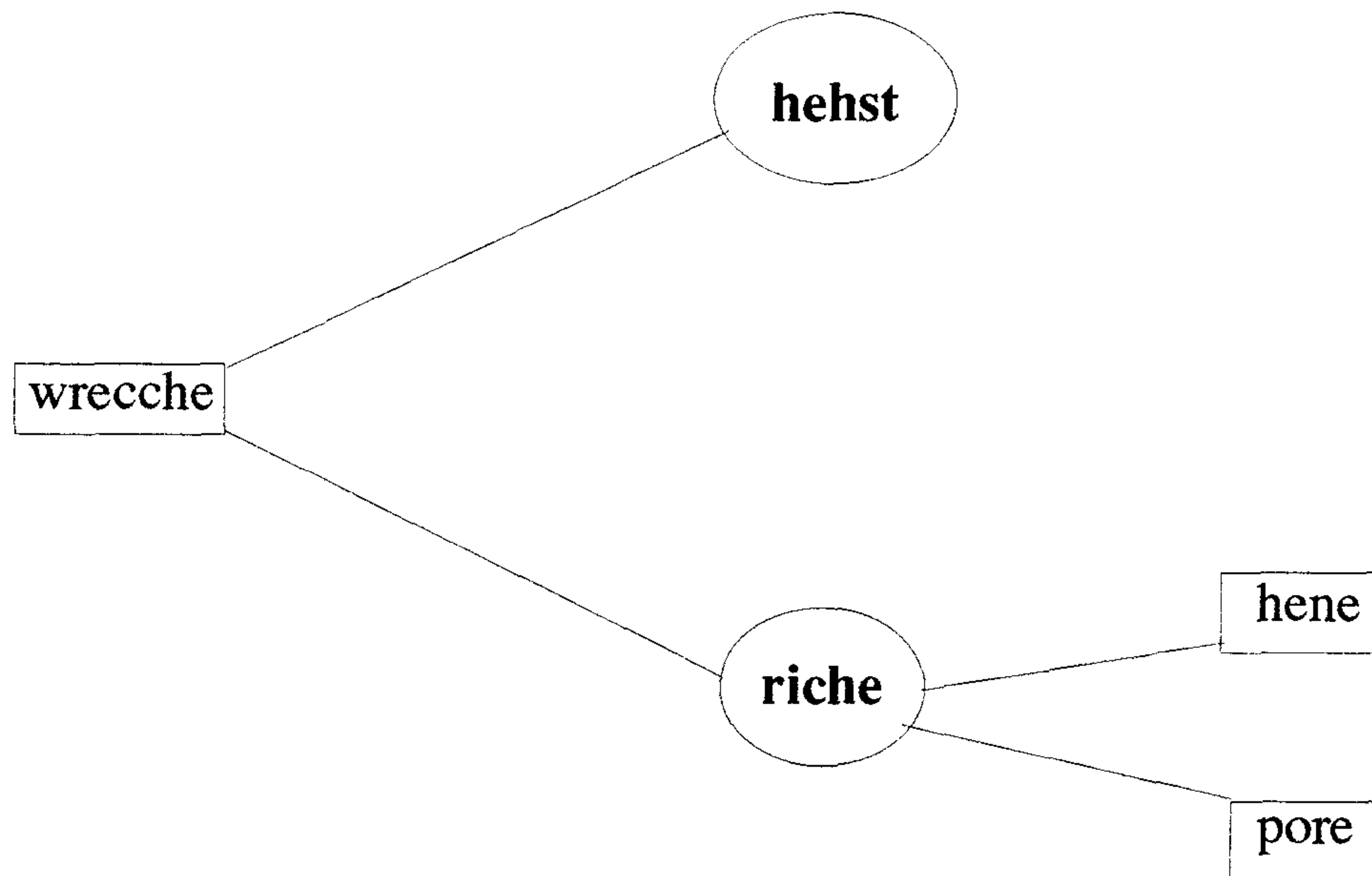
Twice *wrecche* collocates, once with *wowe* (1542) and and once as *wrecchen* with *on-hole* (98003).



### A Map of the antonym

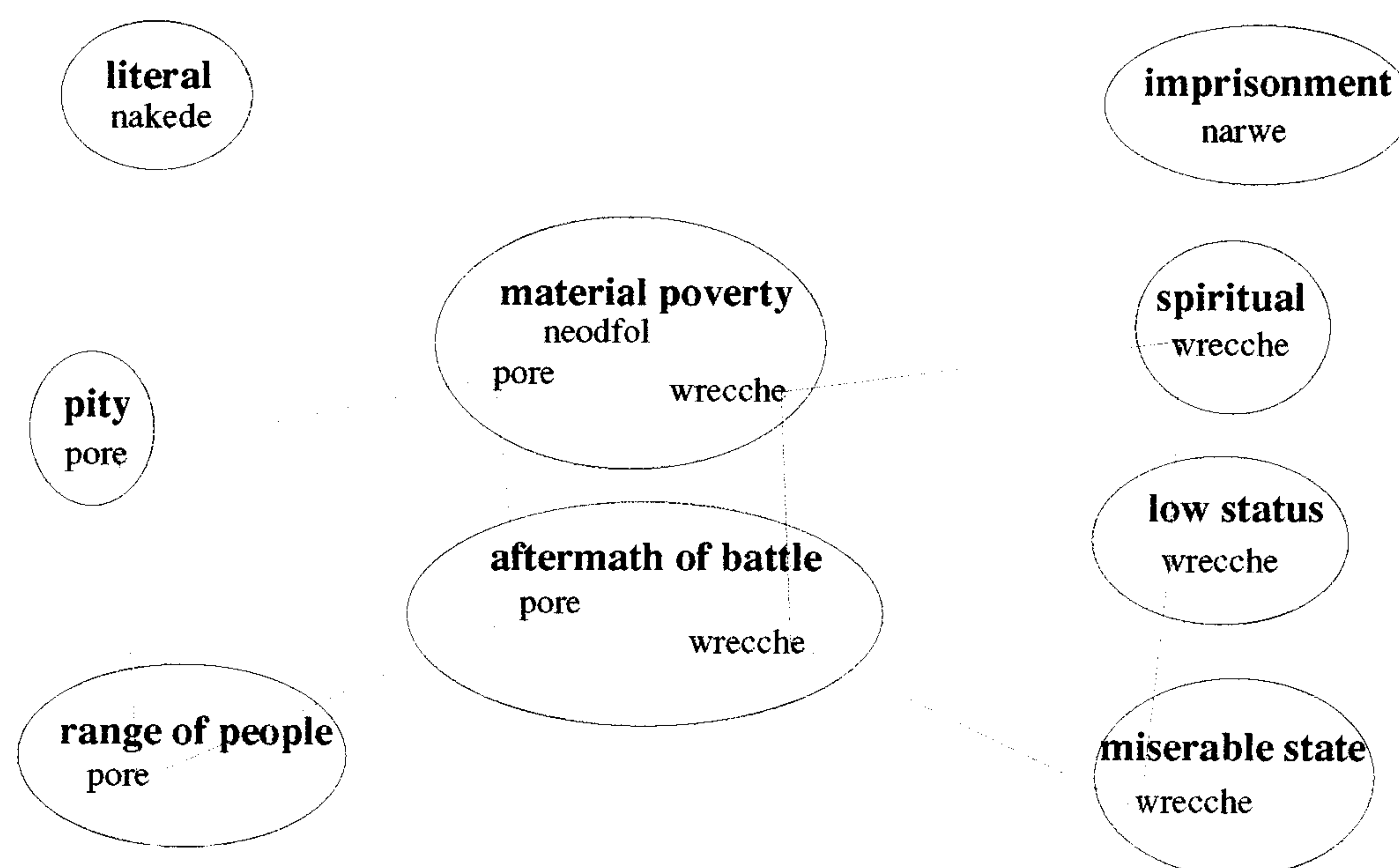
All the poverty items have *riche* as an antonym, which is the only antonym for *hene* and *pore* while *wrecche* has an additional antonym in *hehst*.

The circles contain the items outside the poverty vocabulary, the rectangles the items within the poverty vocabulary.



## A map of the contextual senses

It is clear that *nakede* and *narwe* which were both part of the Old English category in the *TOE* are not used in the context of poverty in MS O.



I have not included *hæne* or *erm* because their instances are conjecture. I have not included *zeomerede* because its sense in MS O is not connected with the 'poverty' category or any bordering or overlapping senses .

It is striking how separate *wrecche* and *pore* appear to be in MS O except in the sense 'material poverty' or 'the poor'. During its long period of use in English up to this point *wrecche* has accumulated a range of additional senses, some of which are reflected here, whereas in this text *pore* is extended, in the first extant recorded time<sup>81</sup> into the sense of 'pity'.

<sup>81</sup> see individual words section from the entry in the MED

## MS C

### Collocation

Collocation with words outside the poverty vocabulary shows only one collocation common to more than one word, which is:

9800                    ælmes-monnes . . . vn-hole . . . wracchen

The remainder of the collocations are as follows, with the items from inside the category first:

298                    armliche . . . benden

1189                    blæðe . . . widewe

13483                    narwe . . . ibunden

1543                    wansiðe . . . warchen

Collocation between items which are within the poverty vocabulary do not show any collocation common to more than one item either except that noted above:

9800                    ælmes-monnes . . . (vn-hole) . . . wracchen

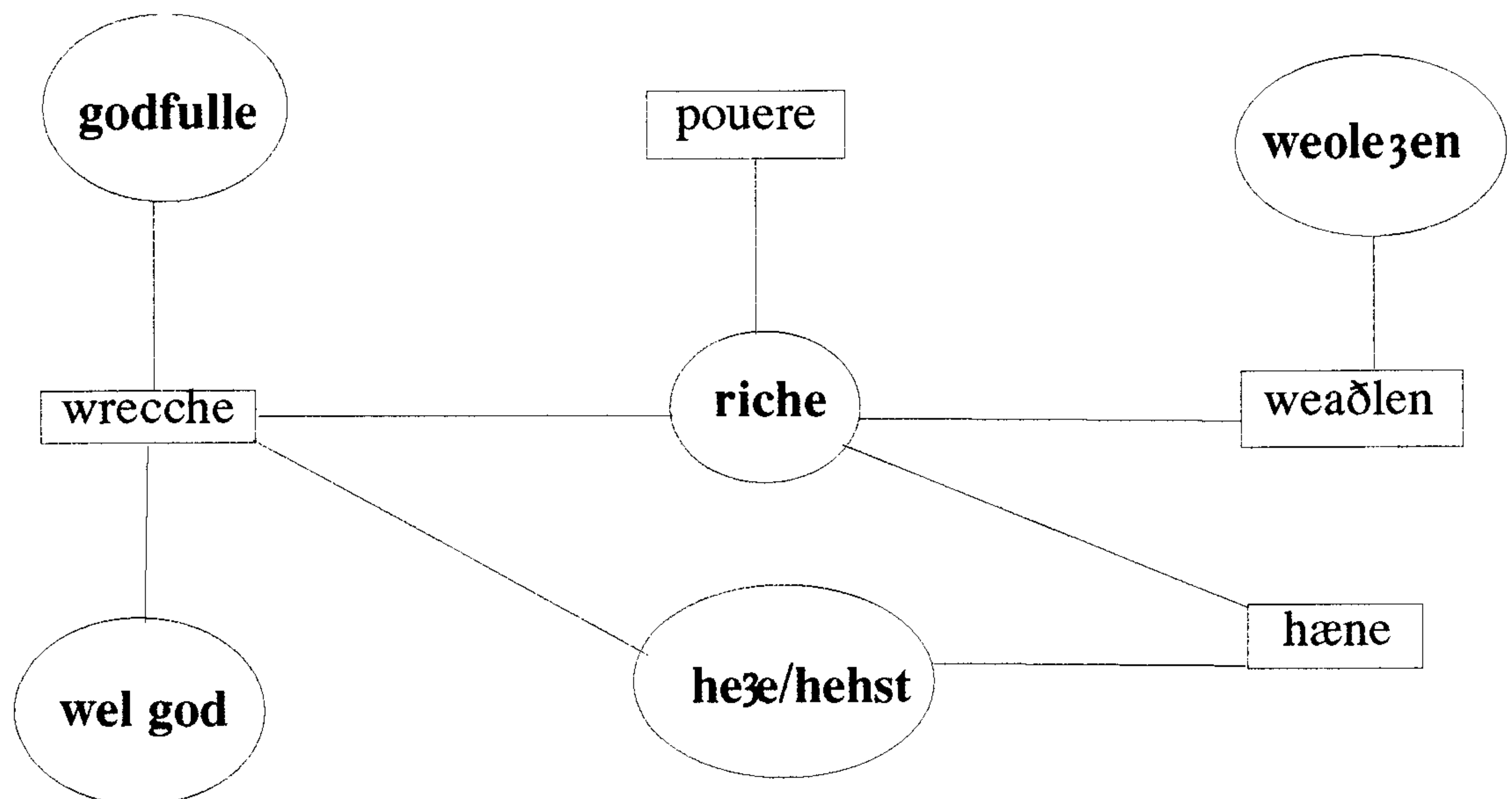
The remainder are:

10605, 15594            ærmest . . . ȝeomereſt

15357-8                neode hafden . . . blæðe

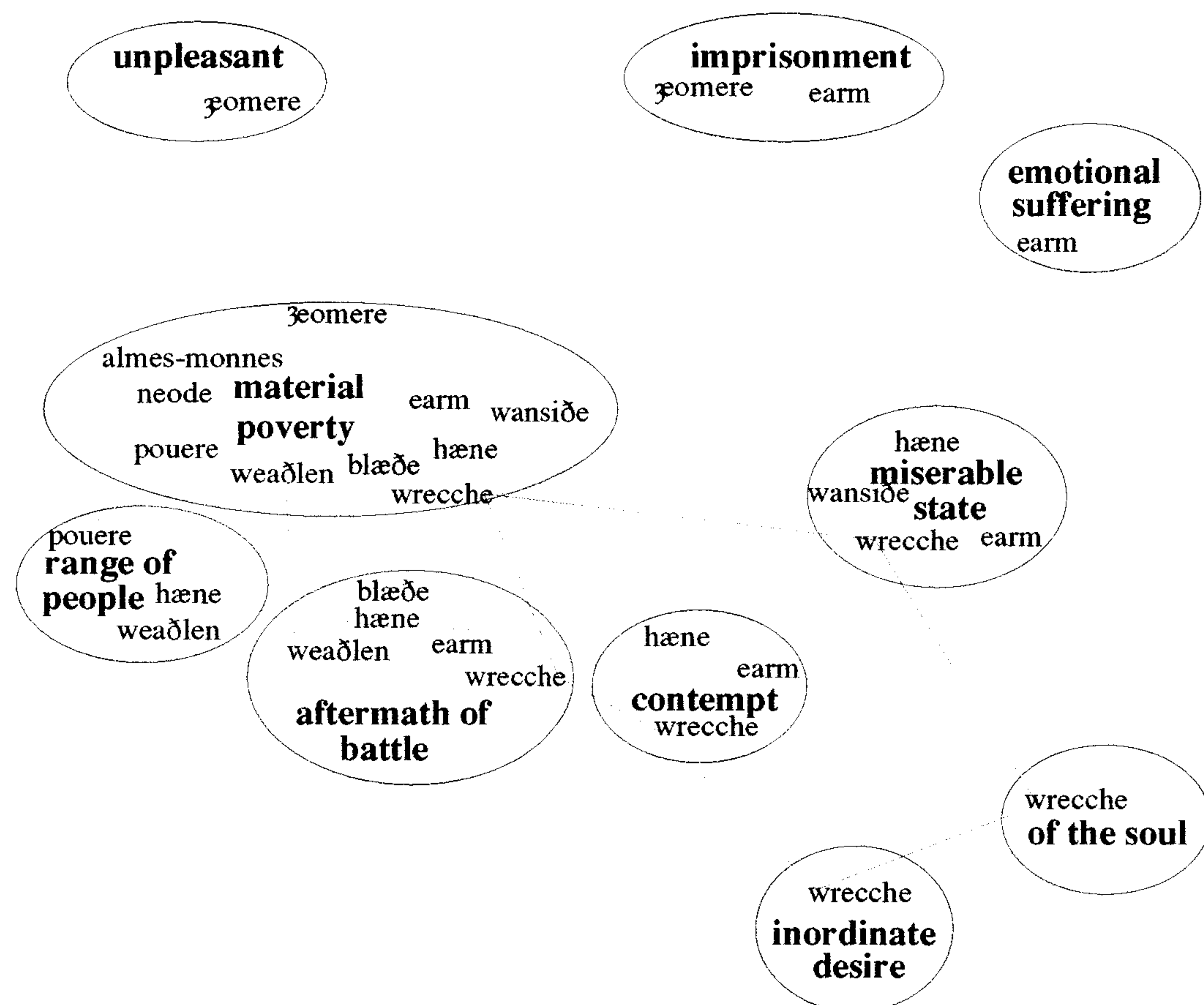


## A Map of the antonym



The item that forms an antonym for all the poverty words here is *riche*. Both *wrecche* and *hæne* also have *heȝe/hehst* as an antonym, reflecting their sense of low status. This antonym is not shared by *pouere* even though *pouere* is used to express the lowest of a range of people to make the sense 'everyone' when its antonym is *riche*. There do not seem to be the negative connotations carried by *wrecche* and *hæne* in this use of *pouere* although it is important to remember that this is the sole use of *pouere* in MS C .

## A map of the contextual senses



It is striking that all the items are present in the central sense 'material poverty'. *Almes-monnes* and *neode* are the only two items that do not have a presence in any additional sense, and *blæð*, *wansiðe* and *pouere* are in two senses. *Pouere* also has two senses although they are both present in one use, that of the range of people to mean 'everyone'. The items with the widest range of senses are *earn* and *wrecche*.

## 7. The AB Texts

### Introduction

For the purpose of identifying vocabulary to make up a lexical category for poverty the collection known as the AB texts is a rewarding group to consider together. I have chosen to study them more closely because they are written as original works in the sense that none of them are copies or reworkings of older texts written in Old English pre-Conquest.<sup>82</sup> They contain a good proportion of content concerning poverty. As with many eME texts their content is religious and so deals with religious ideas of voluntary poverty but, as *Ancrene Wisse* in particular draws on daily life for its imagery, there is also content about the involuntary poor.

Geographically the texts are placed in the South West Midlands, possibly Herefordshire or south Shropshire. Tolkien in 1929 originally identified them as written in the language he called AB, when he noted their shared linguistic features - the Corpus MS of *Ancrene Wisse* is the A and the Bodley 34 manuscript which contains the Katherine Group with the three Saints' Lives with *Hali Meiðhad* and *Sawles Ward* the B. The question of how far the AB texts can be said to be written in a standardised language is much discussed, with some suggestion that the works may have been written in other forms and 'translated' into the AB language at a later date. There are wider issues about the concept of a standard language and the relationship of form and function needs to be addressed (Smith 2000: 136).<sup>83</sup> The fullest account of the features of the AB language is that by d'Ardenne in her edition of St Iulienne (d'Ardenne 1961). These texts appear to be grammatically conservative, continuing some Old English usage, but they are innovative in lexis in that they contain many

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<sup>82</sup> This does not imply that their content is original. Indeed Millett and Wogan-Browne (1992) p. xiii say of the Katherine Group that there is little original about their content and they seem to have been written to make existing material in Latin available in English.

<sup>83</sup> Millett 1982 gives a discussion of AB as a standard language pp xiv-xv and more recently see Smith (2000: 125-139)



words which are recorded in their last uses as well as many recorded in their first with a high proportion of borrowings from Old Norse and Old French and even a few rare instances of Welsh.

d'Ardenne (d'Ardenne 1961: xxx) does not see the consistency of B and A to show an invariable standard written form as in modern English, and Smith (2000: 68) suggests that rather than being a literary standard they should be seen as written in a particular dialect, belonging with other dialects from the area, which remodelled spelling practices based on local Old English usage. However d'Ardenne (d'Ardenne 1961 p. xxix) sees B as written generally in a consistent language, practically identical with A and says that in no other extant manuscript of Middle English does precisely the same idiom with all the special peculiarities of grammar and spelling reappear (d'Ardenne 1961 p. xxvii).<sup>84</sup> They are generally accepted as a group in origin and date and I have treated them as a textual group, even though some of the versions appear to contain additional layers of language variants and it is clear that the transmission of texts involves extremely complex factors.

### **The Manuscripts**

The AB texts exist in several manuscripts in various combinations. The following chart is from Shepherd (Shepherd rev.1991: xiv) showing their distribution. CCCC 402 is the A text and Bodley 34 the B text of the AB language. The manuscripts differ slightly in date and nature and MS Royal 17 A. xxvii appears to have more variations than there are between A and B.<sup>85</sup> MS Titus is described (d'Ardenne and Dobson 1981: lii) as containing language more in the line of descent to modern English than the AB language. *On Ureisun of ure Lauerde* is additionally found in an incomplete form in MS Lambeth 487. *Ancrene Wisse* continued to be copied and adapted for example for use by monks instead of female recluses and exists in additional later

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<sup>84</sup> For a discussion of the development of thought on the AB language see Millett (1982: xiv-xv)

<sup>85</sup> For a comparison see d'Ardenne (1961: xxix-xl)

manuscripts including French and Latin versions.

Laing (1993) dates the manuscripts as follows:

CCCC 402 – c. 1230

Bodley 34 – c. 1225

BL Royal 17 A. xxvii – c. 1220–1230

BL Cotton Nero A. xiv – second quarter of the thirteenth century

BL Cotton Titus D. xviii – c. 1220

BL Cotton Cleopatra C. vi – c. 1225–1230

CCCC 402 Bodley 34 Royal 17 A.xxvii Cotton Nero A.xiv Cotton Titus D.xviii Cotton Cleopatra C.vi

AW			AR		AR		AR
	SK	SK			SK		
	SM	SM					
	SJ	SJ					
	HM				HM		
	SW	SW			SW		
		HoLa	HoLa				
			OoLa				
			OoLd				
			HoLd				
					WoLd		

Shepherd’s abbreviations are:

AW/AR is *Ancrene Wisse*/*Ancren Riwe*.

SK, SM, SJ are the Saints *Katerine*, *Marharet* and *Iuliene*.

HM is *Hali Meiðhad*

SW is *Sawles Warde*

WoLd is *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*

HoLa is *On Lofsong of Ure Lefdi*

OoLa is *On God Ureisun of Ure Lefdi*

OoLd is *On ureisun of ure Lauerde*

HoLd is *On Lofsong of Ure Lauerde*

### **The Content**

These texts are generally considered to fall into three groups, the versions of *Ancrene Wisse*; the Katherine Group, consisting of the lives of *St Katerine*, *St Marharet* and *St Iulienne* with *Sawles Warde* and *Hali Meiðhad*; and the Wooing Group, which contains *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*, *On Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, *On God Ureisun of Ure Lefdi*, *On Lofsong of ure Lauerd* and *On Ureisun of ure Louerde*. Bella Millett identifies these as different groups stylistically. She describes an intimate and conversational style in *Ancrene Wisse*; an alliterative and rhythmic prose in the Lives; a vigorous rhetorical prose in *Hali Meiðhad* and *Sawles Warde*; a lyrical tone in the 'Wooing Group' (Millett 1982: xxi) but does not see this as providing any evidence for or against shared authorship.

### ***Ancrene Wisse***

This was written as a religious Rule for three high born women who were living as anchoresses. It survives in seventeen manuscripts, nine in English, four in Latin and four in French which may mean it was a popular text. Some versions such as Cotton Titus and Pepys were altered to be appropriate for men. I shall use the Corpus text as a base text as this is generally considered to be a good text, close to the original and incorporating authorial changes. I have some comparisons with other versions.



There is much speculation about the author and the date. Shepherd (revised 1991) dismisses the idea that the author is Dominican, but Bella Millett (1992) argues from evidence in the text about the author's own religious observance, and from the structure of the work, that there is increasing evidence that the author was Dominican. Of date Ker (1957) says of A that the first half of the thirteenth century is as near as one ought to go for dating on manuscript evidence. From references made to religious communities in Oxford, London, Shrewesbury and Chester Millett thinks it may date to post 1236. Shepherd thinks probably before 1235.

It seems generally agreed that there is a wide range of loan words, or words whose source is not English, in the text. Influences from Norse are strong, as well as French and some words, rarely found in Middle English texts, from Welsh. The loan words concerning poverty, however, are largely French and dominated by *poure* and *pouerte*. *Ancrene Wisse* is concerned with religious poverty in its content, and because it contains some vivid metaphors from daily life the involuntary poor appear beside the religious voluntary poor.

### ***The Katherine Group***

All of the Katherine Group have Latin sources:

### ***Saints' Lives***

All three saints are virgin martyrs and it has been suggested that they were chosen to fit the names of the three anchoritic sisters who were the audience for *Ancrene Wisse* (Dobson 1976 pp. 138-9) although this remains speculation. The legends, which are well established by the early Middle English period with versions in Latin, are all set in the Diocletian persecutions of the fourth century and the saints are shown as brides of Christ defending their virginity and faith against pagan opposition and persecution.

These may be the earliest of the AB texts and the nearest equivalent to their

style is late Old English prose, particularly the rhythmical prose of Ælfric and Wulfstan (Millett and Wogan-Browne 1992 p. xxxv).<sup>86</sup> Their content is not concerned with poverty but some of the items in the category are used in interesting peripheral senses.

### ***Hali Meiðhad***

There is a variety of sources, the most likely are model sermons by Gregory the Great, Alain of Lille, a letter on virginity by Hildebert of Lavardin and the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, although the text rarely cites sources directly and draws on a wide tradition.<sup>87</sup> *Hali Meiðhad* takes the form of a letter on virginity for the encouragement of virgins. The date tentatively suggested by Millett for its composition, using palaeographical and source evidence,<sup>88</sup> is between roughly 1190 and 1220, but probably later rather than earlier in this period. In pressing the case for earthly marriage to Christ the author paints some vivid images of the miseries of the earthly life and of marriage. These images of earthly life particularly draw on the vocabulary of poverty.

### ***Sawles Warde***

The source seems mainly to be the Anselmian dialogue *De Custodia Interioris Hominis* although there is some material from *Visio Monachi de Eynsham*. It takes the form of the allegory of man as a household under attack from external enemies and internal dissension. The composition is difficult to date but sources place it later than 1196. Bodley 34 is dated to the first quarter of the thirteenth century on palaeographical grounds so composition is between these dates.

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<sup>86</sup> However there seem to be no clear echoes of Ælfric's phrasing in the *AB Lives* and if Ælfric were a stylistic influence this might be expected. (Millett 1998: 18)

<sup>87</sup> For a full discussion see Millett (1982: xlv-ii)

<sup>88</sup> For a full discussion see Millett (1982: xvii)



### ***The Wooing Group***

The lyrical works *Pe Wohunge of ure Lauerd*, *On Lofsong of Ure Lefdi*, *On God Ureisun of Ure Lefdi*, *On ureisun of ure Lauerde* and *On Lofsong of Ure Lauerde* are much shorter than the other AB texts and have a more lyrical style. *Wohunge* is addressed to a woman *sperred . . . wiðinne fowr wahes* ‘pinned within four walls’ (591-3) echoing the anchoritic life of the three sisters for whom *Ancrene Wisse* is written. They contain the theme of Christ as lover and mystical bridegroom and his poverty, particularly in *Wohunge*, is an important element in his suffering. There are echoes between them and the other AB texts. *Wohunge* survives uniquely in Cotton Titus D.xviii which is dated to the second quarter of the thirteenth century but they are difficult to date, apart from the paleographical date evidence suggested by the manuscripts that contain them, and although it has been suggested that *Wohunge* in particular draws on material in *Ancrene Wisse* and their parallels are clear, there seems to be no agreement that one necessarily predates the other.

### **Content**

Voluntary poverty is an important element in these religious texts. The social and economic aspects of material poverty in a society which has moved from a gift to a cash economy over this period are also present, particularly in *Ancrene Wisse*, for example in the vivid portrait in of the dissembling beggar tricking the rich into giving him alms by a calculated show of false physical and material distress, which seems to foreshadow the preoccupation with the undeserving poor of the 16th century (AW 168 89a/22-169 89b/21).

### **Associated texts**

There are connections between these texts and those in MS Lambeth 487 and Lazamon’s *Brut*. They are attributed geographically to the same area as Lazamon’s



*Brut* and are close in attributed date. Mack says there is an obvious connection in vocabulary and alliterative phrase (Mack 1934: xxiii) between the AB texts and the *Brut*; however their vocabularies for poverty show marked differences as will be seen in the comparison with *Lazamon*.

## The Category

I have identified twenty-one items using the criteria. There are six criteria that are used to qualify a word for inclusion in the study.

1. All words in the texts that are present in the *TOE* category of poverty are included, even where they do not carry the sense of poverty in their specific context, in order to track their change over time.
2. Words are included which are not in the *TOE* category of poverty if they are found in this sense in the texts and this is clear from the context.
3. Words are included when they are given the component of poverty in a dictionary, illustrated with citations from the texts, or in a glossary which is derived from the texts which are being studied.
4. Words are included when they appear in context to be serving as an antonym to words that contain the component of wealth or riches.
5. Words are included when they appear in collocation or are serving as synonyms or partial synonyms for words that themselves contain the element of poverty based on the criteria for inclusion or when they are used to translate a word from another language which has the sense 'poverty' such as Latin *pauper*.
6. Words are included when they contain the component, or contribute to the context of, poverty in comments in footnotes or secondary literature about the texts.

The twenty-one items identified appear in the AB texts in various grammatical functions and in various forms. Some of the forms are consistent within a text, but some have forms which differ across texts, for example *meoseise* in AW but *meseise*

in *Wohunge*. Some forms have no consistency, such as *nede* and *neod* which are used indiscriminately within a single text. For ease of reference forms will generally be referred to in discussion as listed here. The numbers in brackets are the numbers of instances that I have found<sup>89</sup>:

**Items which are from the TOE *poverty* category**

*earm* (13)                      *nacod* (18)                      *nearones* (17)                      *nede* (99)

*þearf* (16)

Total 5

**Items which are OE but are not in the TOE *poverty* category**

*eðelich* (14)                      *godles* (3)                      *helples* (5)

*mistrum* (1)

*wac* (32)                      *wone* (18)                      *wrecche* (32)

Total 7

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<sup>89</sup> The numbers of instances of individual words do not always tally with the Concordances. Sometimes I have fewer instances because I omit senses, for example I have omitted instances of *earm* with the sense ‘arm’. Sometimes I have more instances as I have included other textual versions, such as AW Nero while the AW Concordance is confined to the Corpus MS.

### Items which are from ON

*lah* (46)                      *nowcin* (11)                      *wontreaðe* (14)

Total 3

### Items which are from OFr

*beg* (3)                      *hearlot* (3)                      *meoseise* (14)                      *pouerte* (15)                      *poure* (42)

*westi* (3)

Total 6

The source languages of this vocabulary of poverty reflect the assessment made of these texts by Zettersten among others (Zettersten 1965) that the influx of words from sources outside OE is considerable. He suggests about 580 French and about 100 Scandinavian words are recorded in MS A of *AW* and, what is important, that some of the French words occur quite often. The frequent use of some of the French words will certainly be seen to be true of the occurrences of *meoseise*, *poure* and *pouerte*. While a word such as *lah* (ON), which has a literal and a metaphoric function, may appear to be very frequent, in comparison with some of the other words it contains greater polysemy and the instances reflect a greater number of peripheral senses.

There are some of the earliest attestations of words, for example *meoseise* and, from *AW*, *beggere*, *beggin* and *hearloz*. Many others are given as early examples in ME in the *MED*.

The majority of the words in the poverty category that I have identified (twelve) are from OE, although their senses may have extended or shifted by the time the AB texts were written in the first half of the thirteenth century. Of the 9 remainder there



are twice as many from OFr (six) as ON (three). Although this is too small a sample for any conclusions to be drawn about source language distribution, it is consistent with the observations made by Shepherd (Shepherd 1991), among others, that the vocabulary of the AB texts contains many words of French origin with a much smaller Scandinavian element.

### Totals for each group

The total of individual instances by group is:

<i>TOE</i> poverty category	163
OE (not in <i>TOE</i> category)	105
ON	71
OFr	80

Although the *TOE* poverty category seems to be by far the most heavily represented here, this total includes sixteen instances of *þearf*, of which all the instances carry, as a verb, the sense of ‘to need to’ (glossary Millett EETS 284)<sup>90</sup>; and the ninety nine instances of *nede* which also contain a majority of items which carry a similar sense to *þearf*. These are senses they had in OE. While *þearf* was a central item in the *TOE* poverty category, *nede* was not and many of its instances in the AB texts are a development of its OE senses in other categories, such as *nēodian* ‘to be necessary, require, be required’ or *nīed* ‘necessity, compulsion, duty’ with its associated noun and verb (Clark Hall repr. 1993).

The groups are surprisingly even in the number of individual word occurrences, particularly the ON and OFr groups. The number of words from ON number half those from OFr. and yet their totals are close, seventy one and eighty respectively. Three of the OFr items (*beg*, *hearlot* and *westi*) total only three occurrences each,

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<sup>90</sup> For example AW 37a/20 *ne þearf þu noht dreden* ‘you need not fear’.

while the three remaining items are very close in number to the three items in the ON group, and this creates the difference in the totals.

### Individual word totals

There is an enormous variation in the totals for individual words:

<i>nede</i> (99),	<i>lah</i> (46),	<i>poure</i> (42),	<i>wac</i> (32)	<i>wrecche</i> (32)
<i>nacod</i> (18)	<i>wone</i> (18)	<i>nearones</i> (17)	<i>þearf</i> (16)	<i>pouerte</i> (15)
<i>meoseise</i> (14)	<i>wontreaðe</i> (14)	<i>eðelich</i> (14)	<i>earm</i> (13)	<i>nowcin</i> (11)
<i>helples</i> (5)	<i>beg</i> (3)	<i>godles</i> (3)	<i>hearlot</i> (3)	<i>westi</i> (3)
<i>mistrum</i> (1) <sup>91</sup>				

All four groups are represented in the five most frequent items, but in the ten highest totals seven of the words are from OE. As the high number of instances of *nede* reflect its use in a neutral or grammatical function as in *AW 2a/5 7 is nede betere warde* (and needs to be better guarded) and many of its instances are of this nature, this skews its apparent frequency of use in this context. The totals of ON *lah* and OFr *poure*, by comparison, are particularly high. *Lah* has its earliest citation in *MED* dated 1175 in Bodley 343, and in some of its *MED* senses the AB texts are the earliest citation. *Poure* has an early citation in the *MED* sense 1 as a.1225 in the Lambeth

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<sup>91</sup> This is the only recorded instance of *mistrum*.

Homilies and again the AB texts provide the earliest citation for some of its senses.<sup>92</sup>

### Distribution across the texts

	<u>TOE <i>poverty</i> field</u>	<u>OE</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>OFr</u>
<u>AW</u>	earmlice	eðelich	lah	beggere
				beggilde
	naket	mistrum	wontreaðe	<u>beggin</u>
	nearow	wac		hearloz
				meoseise
	nede	wone		pouerte
	þearf	wrecche		poure
<u>Katherine Group</u>				
<u>St K</u>	nakede	godlese	nowcin	poure
	neode	wone	wontreaðe	
	neodfule	wrecches		
	þearf			
<u>St Iu</u>				
	earm	helples	wontreaðe	
	naket	wrecches		
	neode	wrecchedom		
<u>St M</u>				
	earm	wrecche	lah	
	nede		nowcin	
	nedlunge		wontreðe	
<u>Hali Meiðhad</u>				
	earm	eðelich	lah	poure
	earmð	godles	wontreaðe	westi
	nearewe	wac		
	nede	wone		

<sup>92</sup> More details are in the section on the individual words.



þearf	wrecche		
<u>Sawles Warde</u>			
neod	eðeliche	lah	poure
þerf	wake	wontreaðe	
	wone	nowcin	
	wrecchedom		
<u>Wohunge Group</u>			
<u>Wohunge</u>			
naket	wac		mesaise
	wacnesse		poure
	wone		pouerte
	wrecche		westi
<u>Lofsong of Ure Lauerd</u>			
neodfulles	helples	lowe	
	wone	wondred	
<u>Lofsong of ure Lefdi</u>			
neoden			
<u>Ureisun of ure Louerde</u>			
	helples	lah	
	wac		
	wone		
	wrecches		

Text here stands for the work. I have not tried to make a chart that reflects the different manuscripts of each work although I have included some data from different manuscripts in the detailed analysis.

There are some caveats. Some of these texts, such as *AW*, are long while some, such as *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*, are very short. Comparisons between texts are therefore difficult. In addition the words contained in the texts are, clearly, drawn from the content, which means that poverty vocabulary may be sparse or missing because the text is not concerned with poverty in its content. This is particularly true of the Saints'

Lives in which the focus is on physical martyrdom and suffering. However, all the texts contain some items from the poverty category and the additional senses in which they are used add to the profile of the senses that these words inhabit.

## Features

There have been many attempts to establish the stylistic relationship between the AB texts and OE into eME textual tradition, and to establish the connections between the works which comprise the AB texts.<sup>93</sup> The sample of language choice in this instance is too small to provide serious evidence, but some observations can be made.

Poverty words from OE, from inside and outside the TOE poverty category, are widely distributed, appearing in all texts except *Ureisun of ure Louerde*.

ON poverty words appear in all groups, and in all texts apart from *Wohunge* and *Lofsong of ure Lefdi*. *Wohunge* is rich in OFr words which form its main poverty vocabulary.

OFr poverty words appear in all groups and in all texts apart from *St Iulienne*, *St Marherete*, and the three shorter works in the Wooing Group. There has been much comment on the distinctions between the Katherine Group and the other AB texts in the secondary literature. In the distribution of poverty words this distinction seems to be particularly true of the Saints' Lives, where the only use of OFr poverty vocabulary is in St K. where *poure* is used of the people to whom the saint distributes her parents' goods. Content could be a factor here.

There appear to be several connections between *AW* and *Wohunge*:

1. Both have a diversity of OFr terms where other texts have only *poure* from OFr<sup>94</sup>.
2. *AW* and *Wohunge* contain a greater proportion of words of French derivation in

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<sup>93</sup> Among others Bethurum 1935 and Millett 1988 who also gives a good overall survey.

<sup>94</sup> *Westi* in HM is a literal use, see individual word section. Had its sense not been extended by its use in *Wohunge* it would not have been included in this study. This extension is confirmed in glossaries and in the *MED* but there is some question about whether the source language is OE or OFr.

comparison to their total poverty vocabulary than the other texts. This is striking in *Wohunge*, perhaps because of its comparative shortness.

3. They are the only texts to use OFr. *meoseise* (*Woh. mesaise*) and the only texts to use *pouerte*.

4. Neither use ON *nowcin*<sup>95</sup>.

This may reflect textual connections between *AW* and *Wohunge*, for example the passage in *AW* (see appendix) which deals with Christ's poverty throughout his life is paralleled in *Wohunge* (see appendix) where it is considered to be influenced by *AW* (Savage and Watson 1991 et. al.).

As would be expected from such a closely related set of texts, there is consistency of vocabulary content, and the greater number of items in *AW* may be a reflection of its greater length. The lack of *poure* in the Saints' lives of *St Iu* and *St M* may be a reflection of their content. On the other hand there are connections between *AW* and *Wohunge*, the only texts that use *meoseise* while neither use *nowcin* almost as if these two are mutually exclusive.

## Individual words

The words are considered in groups which are based on their source language.

## Words from the *TOE* poverty category

There are five words which have survived into the AB texts from the Thesaurus of Old English category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** but they do not all continue to carry the sense of poverty:

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<sup>95</sup> *Wohunge* does not use any ON poverty words.



<i>nede</i> (and words derived from it)	99 instances
<i>nacod</i>	18 instances
<i>nearones</i>	17 instances
<i>þearf</i>	16 instances
<i>earm</i>	13 instances

*hēan* is part of the TOE category and appears in the AB texts in various forms but is not included in the poverty vocabulary for the AB texts because the derivation is complex and the instances in the AB texts appear to be derived from *hēnan* ‘to overcome, oppress’. It is included in the poverty vocabulary for other texts, and in *Lazamon* in particular.

### ***nede* and *þearf***

All sixteen instances of *þearf* are an expression for ‘necessity’, as are most of the ninety nine instances of *nede* so I am considering these two items together.

### Necessity

In the AB texts *þearf* is used solely as an expression of ‘necessity’, for example:

ne þerf us nowðer for deað ne for deouel dreden.

nor need we fear death or the devil

SW 96/10

*Nied* is also used in this sense of ‘necessity’ in the AB texts:

7 is nede betere warde

and needs to be better guarded

AW 82a/153

*nied* - other senses

Material poverty

In St Katerine the saint, as she is dying, asks for intercession for all suffering people who call upon her:

ant cleopieð to me hwen ha schulen þe derf of deað drehen oðer  
hwense ha hit eauer doð i neode ant i nowcin, . . . aflei from ham  
al uuel – weorre ant wone baðe, ant untidi wederes, hunger . . .  
and call to me when they must undergo the pain of death, or whenever  
they do it, in need or in suffering . . . drive off all evil from them, both  
war and want and untimely weather, hunger . . .

*St K B. 877*

Here *neode* collocates with *nowcin*, also part of the AB poverty field. This is an instance where *neode* could have a sense of more generalised suffering rather than poverty.

However in the AB texts the form *neodful/e* usually carries a clearer meaning of poverty. *Neodful/e* occurs six times, and seems in the majority of instances to carry a central sense of ‘material poverty’.

*neodfule*

material poverty

The following instance, addressed to Christ, has a general sense:

ase þu ert neodfulles help

As you are the help of the needy

*Lof Lauerd* 88

which echoes the similar phrase using *helples* (see below) but the other instances show *neodful* with the sense of material poverty. Christ is referred to as *neodful* of food in *AW* 133 71a/2 where the context carries the poverty component. This is written of Christ on earth in a passage against covetousness, in which his earthly poverty is the central theme. It could be argued that it is the object, *mete*, that gives the specific meaning here, but the context is that of Christ's poverty and it is cited by the *MED* to illustrate *neodful* sense 2a. 'In want, poor'.

The following citation is clear:

schulen beon of wurmes. his cuuertur 7 his hwitel. þe nalde

þerwið neodfule feden ne schruden

the blanket and the sheet of him who would not feed and clothe

the needy with them (earthly goods) shall be of worms

*AW* 111 58a/8<sup>96</sup>

To feed and clothe the materially poor are among the requirements of Christian charity and almsgiving and here those materially poor are *neodfule*.

Through collocation *neodful* appears in this central sense, here collocated with

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<sup>96</sup> A reference to Isaiah 14.11.



*poure*:

þ. he madeð cumen ham forte dealen his feader feh.  
to neodfule 7 to poure  
whom he made come home so as to share out his father's money  
among the needy and poor

AW 116 61a/6

and here with *nakede* also a part of the AB poverty category:

ane [a] dale ha etheold of hire ealdrene god,  
ant spende al þet oðer i neodfule ant i nakede.  
she kept part of her parents' money but spent the rest  
on the needy and naked

*St K. B. 1v/34* (R neodful; T nedfule)

### Eager, desirous

This is a rare sense, there is one instance in AW:

þus neodful he wes 7 is aþet tes dei to ontenden his luue  
So eager was he - and is until this day - to kindle his love

AW 204 108a/27

is the only citation in *MED* for the sense 'Eager, desirous'. which has a separate entry<sup>97</sup>. This would appear to be a rare eME survival of OE *neod* 'desire, longing;

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<sup>97</sup> *Niedful* appears once in the *TOE* as part of **06.02.04.01 Want, need: .Necessary** but seems to have separated into these two senses by eME. Another form which

zeal, earnestness' (Clark Hall).

### Collocation

AW 116 61a/6	neodfule 7 to poure
St K B. 34	neodfule ant i nakede
St K B. 876	i neode ant i nowcin

### *nacod*

There are eighteen instances of *nacod* with literal and extended senses.

### Material poverty

The physical sense of 'nakedness' can stand for the poor. Christian charitable acts were to feed, clothe and house the poor and in *St Katherine* the saint is shown using part of her inherited wealth for charity:

ane a dale ha etheold of hire ealdrene god,  
ant spende al þet oðer i neodfule ant i nakede.  
she kept part of her parents' money but spent the rest  
on the needy and naked

*St K. B. 1v/34* (R neodful; T nedfule)

Here *nakede* is a metonymic use in which a symptom of the condition is acting as a part standing for the whole and the whole is 'the poor' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 37-

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appears in AW is *gnedelich* (Corpus) *MED* sense a. 'Scarcely, barely' with only one other citation from 1300 *Euriche freman* (Rwl. c. 22). It is used in AW Nero in *MED* sense b. 'Moderately, frugally' replacing Corpus *rihtliche* and *meaðfulliche*. *Geniedelic*<sup>o</sup> is in TOE **12.05.06.03 Necessity, constraint ..Compulsory, forced**. The development of *-nied-* in eME is complex.

38). The collocation is with *neodfule*, also part of the AB poverty category.

### Lacking in

Many of the words used in the vocabulary of poverty have additional senses in the area of ‘want, lack’. *Nacod* does not appear to have had this sense in OE and does not appear in the corresponding *TOE* categories<sup>98</sup>. This is a new area for *nacod* and has developed by eME:

Pu seist þe nis neod na medecine. ah þu art blind iheortet ne ne  
sist nawt hu þu art poure 7 naket of halinesse ant gastelich wrecche.  
You say you need no medicine but you are blind hearted and do not see  
how you are poor and naked of holiness, and a spiritual wretch.

AW 92 48a/10

This is the earliest citation for *MED* sense 4 *naket in* ‘lacking in something’.

### Literal and metaphoric senses

#### i. Literal

There are several examples of the apparently straightforward sense of physical nakedness in the AB texts. The image of Christ bound naked to the pillar occurs in AW 97 50b/6 and *Wohunge*:

hu þu was naket bunden faste to þe piler.  
how you were bound naked fast to the pillar

<sup>98</sup> In *OED* III 8. a. ‘Bare, destitute or devoid of something’ the earliest citation is c897 King Alfred’s Pastoral Care. *Se lyte 3a feond swa micle ieðlicor ðæt mod 3ewundað swa he hit on 3iet nacodre ðære byrnan wærscipes*. Then 1220 onwards.



The other instances of physical nakedness use the phrase *steort naket*<sup>99</sup> and in both the *OED* and the *MED* the AB texts are its earliest citations<sup>100</sup>.

The phrase is also used of those who destroy their goodness through the desire for praise and are likened to those who destroy the Lord's fig tree. The verb used, *despuillet* (AW 40b/17 translation of Latin *spoliauit*),<sup>101</sup> is violent and later gathers senses of pillage and ravine and is used one other time in AW, of Christ:

ah alre meast pouerte com 3et her efter. For steort naket he wes  
despuillet o þe rode

But the greatest poverty of all came after this again: for he was  
stripped stark naked on the cross.

AW 133 71a/11

This is the powerful culmination of a passage on the poverty of Christ and apart from these two occurrences *despuillet* is used nowhere else in the AB texts.<sup>102</sup> From *MED* evidence this seems to be another word which is first attested in English in AW in both these instances. Wider issues from this passage are discussed later.

There are instances of *steort naket* in each of the three saints' lives, *St Iuliane B*

<sup>99</sup> *Steort* 'tail', is not used in this sense in OE; *eallnacod<sup>op</sup>*, *limnacod<sup>op</sup>* are given in *TOE*.

<sup>100</sup> It appears that the earliest form is *steort naket* which disappears during the fourteenth century, when *stark naket* appears, though with a slight overlap in date see *MED*

<sup>101</sup> Joel 1.7. Earliest citation for *despoiler* *MED* 2 (c) *to ravage or devastate (a tree, vegetation)*.

<sup>102</sup> The *MED* does not seem to record this use of *despuillet* of Christ - the earliest citation in sense 1(b) 'to strip (sb.) of his clothes; ~ **out**; ~ **naked**, strip to the skin; ~ **into the smoke**, strip to the chemise;' is c1330 (?a1300) *Arth.&M.*(Auch.) 1403: *He was despuled fram heued to ground, Marked woman & maiden founde.*

211; *St Katherine* B 564 and:

qð he to his cwelleres strupeð hire steort-naket 7 hongeð hire on heh  
he said to his executioners to strip her stark naked and hang her on high

*St Marharet* 21v 2

These instances and a further two<sup>103</sup> are all about the suffering of the martyr saints at the hands of their tormentors. *Naket* is collocated with *steort* each time it appears in the Saints' Lives, except when it is used as a noun in the reference to the poor as *nakede* in *St Katherine*.

## ii. Metaphoric

There were abstract senses for *nacod* in OE such as in the *TOE* categories

**05.10.05.04.13 A removal of that which obscures or conceals .Not covered, without covering** and **09.03.04.03 Plain, simple** in the head category. These last continue into the AB texts, particularly AW where sins are referred to as *naket* and in which the discussion of the need for the confession of sin to be 'naked, unconcealed', draws on this metaphoric use<sup>104</sup>.

## Collocation

AW 48a/10	poure 7 naket . . . 7 gastelich wrecche
AW 62 31b/11	naket sunne
AW 71a/10	meast pouerte . . for steort naket
AW 78 40b/17	steort naket
AW 133 71a/11	steort naket

<sup>103</sup> Also *St M.* 32r/21; *St Iu.* B. 155.

<sup>104</sup> AW 62 31b/11, 165 87b/5 naked sin; 156 82b/6-7, 162 86a/15, 163 86a/24 naked confession.

<i>AW</i> 163 86a/27	steort naket
<i>St K</i> B. 34	neodefule ant i nakede
<i>St K</i> B. 564	steort-naket
<i>St M</i> 21v/2	steort-naket
<i>St Iu</i> B. 155	steort naket
<i>St Iu</i> B. 211	steort naket

### ***nearones***

There are seventeen instances of *nearones* which is included because of its presence in the *TOE* ‘poverty’ category. In terms of dictionary definitions for the AB period, glossaries, antonyms or synonyms within the AB texts it does not meet the linguistic criteria.

### **Material poverty**

In the AB texts it seems to have central membership of the ‘poverty’ category on contextual grounds, as it is used as a sign of Christ’s poverty on earth:

Swa nearow wes þ. stude

So cramped was the place

*AW* 133 70b/19

This is in a section in which the poverty of Christ’s birth is an example against covetousness. The poverty of Christ’s lodging at his birth provides an example against greed and there is an interesting passage, which is considered at more length in the discussion on *pouerte* below, in which his condition on the cross is described as



*pouerte* and one of the elements that contribute to this condition is:

o rode. brad as scheld buuen. . . . nearow bineoðen

on the cross, wide at the top like a shield . . . . narrow at the bottom

AW 199 106a/2

where the little space the cross occupies physically on the earth becomes the symbol of Christ's material lack of housing. This is a condition that could be relieved through alms, housing the homeless.

'Narrowness' in Christ's life on earth is also a model for the confines of the anchoresses in their voluntary poverty. Even before his birth, in Mary's womb Christ was confined (AW192 102a/26; AW 192 102a/28) and the anchoresses' walls imitate his confinement in his cradle:

Beo 3e ibunden inwið fowr large wahes? 7 he in a nearow cader

Are you constrained within four wide walls - and he in a confined cradle?

AW 192 102b/3

Two things are features of the anchoritic life, narrowness, that is confinement, and bitterness:

þeos twa þing limpeð to ancre. nearowðe. 7 bitternesse.

These two things pertain to an anchorite, confinedness and bitterness.

AW 192 102a/26

In context when Christ's poverty is expressed through the criteria for alms, where *nearones* is used of the lack of, or mean condition, of Christ's housing, it could be argued that its inclusion in the 'poverty' category is partly reliant on the encyclopedic knowledge, or assumptions, informing this concept.

#### Literal and metaphoric extensions

*Nearones* is used in its purely physical sense for example AW 30 12b/24 of windows; AW 221 117a/7 of the end of a horn etc.

As with *nacod* there is metaphoric extension of its physical referent. It is used in *HM* 15/26 of the emotional or spiritual confinement found in a physically spacious home when a husband is being difficult; in the sense of strictness in a judge, at Domesday;<sup>105</sup> as how to treat a maid or ones self.<sup>106</sup> It is also used once of the way that leads to Christ:

7 schunchen of þe nearowe wei þ. leadeð to eche lif.

and scare (me) away from the narrow way that leads to eternal life.

*St Iu.* 42v/20 301 (nearowe missing in R.)

#### Collocation

AW 192 102a/26                      nearowðe 7 bitternesse

AW 221 117a/6                      nearowe . . . hearde

#### *earm*

Although *earm* was in use when these texts were written with the sense 'material

<sup>105</sup> *Nearwe* in TOE categories **06.01.07.01 Strictness, exactness; 08.01.03.07.04 Severity, harshness** AW 81 42b/7; AW 76 39b/7 etc.

<sup>106</sup> AW 138 73b/15 (of how to treat a maid) etc.

poverty' it does not seem to have carried that sense in the AB texts.

### Earthly suffering

All the instances in the AB texts of *earmðe* are in *Hali Meiðhad*. The concept appears in other AB texts, but nowhere else is *earmðe* the chosen vocabulary.

These five instances fit into *MED* sense b. 'misery, wretchedness, grief, suffering'. Four describe the miseries of marriage - 17/25 the physical miseries of pregnancy; 18/26 (cited in *MED*) what St Paul calls *tribulaciones carnis* (miseries of the flesh); 14/2 (cited in *MED*) the misery of even happily married people when one of them dies; 3/6 the troubles associated with marriage (which include the worries of running a house and servants, and so is unlikely to mean material poverty); while the other, 14/34, describes the misery people endure to win worldly gain.

There is a greater distribution across the texts of *earm* as an adverb or an adjective.

The instances in *Hali Meiðhad* are similar to the senses of *ermðe* outlined above, for example one describes the state to which a woman is brought by marriage:

ant se ofte beon maket earm of an eðlich mon þet tu list under

and be made wretched so often by the worthless man you are subject to

*HM* 3/34

and the context is full of references to wealth and riches, both of earth and in heaven.

### Of the flesh or earthly life

The other two uses of *earm* in *Hali Meiðhad* are in the compound *earm-hwile* both of which refer to the troubles of bringing up a child. The suffix *hwile* was not attached to *earm* to form this meaning in OE. In category **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction**



subcategory **.Time of Adversity** there are no *earm* prefixes among 15 words; in subcategory **..Time of weariness:** *langunghwīl<sup>op</sup>* is the only word, and in subcategory **..Time of distress (present life):** *wræchwīl* is the only word. However in the same category **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction:** *earm* appears as an element or a word in **.Wretched man; .Afflicted, full of trouble; ..Gloomy, miserable; and .Calamitous,** so this is not a new field for *earm*:

in his fostrunge forð, moni earm-hwile

and in bringing it up, many weary hours (of a child)

*HM 17/12*

to ferkin ant to fostrin hit se moni earm-hwile

so many weary hours in feeding and rearing it (of a child)

*HM 18/21*

In the *MED* entry for *erm*, sense c. *~life*, ‘wretched life, ie. life on earth’; *~hwil*, ‘unhappy time, weary hour’ the latter sense is illustrated as *earm-hwile* solely by both these instances.

#### Of sin, hell and the opponents of Christ

##### i. Of sin

In *AW* *earm* is used once only - in the form *earmlice* - in a translation of a quotation from St Augustine:

*Quam difficile surgit quem moles male consuetudinis premit*

O seið seint austin hu earmliche he ariseð þe under wune of sunne

haueð ilein longe.

‘Oh’, says St Augustine, in what hardship does he arise who under the habit of sin has lain long.’

AW 88b/23 (On St John’s Gospel 49.10, 24)

It is difficult to assess the use of *earm*- here. It is the only instance in *AW*, a long text, and it is in a translation from Latin of a quotation, which may have constrained the choice of the word. The quotation is Augustine *In Iohannis Evangelium* XLIX.x.24 (PL 36 col.1756) which is a discussion of the raising of Lazarus<sup>107</sup>. The *AB* texts have a large variety of words for misery and tribulation<sup>108</sup> and it is striking that *earm/ðe* is not included in this vocabulary of misery other than here and in *HM*.

## ii. Opponents of Christ

*St Marherete* has two instances both of which are the saint’s form of address to the demon:

"Stute nu, earne steorue . . . "

"Now stop it, you wretched and pestilent creature . . . "

*St M B.* 28/14

"Stille beo þu stille", quoð ha, "earnest alre þinge . . . "

"Quiet, be quiet!" she said, "most wretched of all things . . . "

*St M B* 41/20 (R. has steorue)

The phrase in *St Marherete* 41/20 is echoed exactly in *St Iulienne* and describes the demon who is attacked by the saint and the merchants in the market:

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<sup>107</sup> *Anchoritic Spirituality* Savage and Watson note 37 p. 390

<sup>108</sup> Bately notes “*Angoise*, too is only one of a range of terms (in which the Katherine Group is particularly rich) for the concept ‘suffering, pain’” (1998).

As he wes imaket tus earmest alre þinge

After he had become the most wretched of all things

*St Iu B 509*

These uses all link *earm* with the spiritual enemies of Christ. The OE sense in the TOE of **Moral evil, depravity** could be a factor here, although, if so, the strength of this is not reflected in either the *OED* or the *MED*.<sup>109</sup>

There appears to be no sense of *earmð* as ‘material poverty’ in the AB texts although it is in use in this sense at this period.<sup>110</sup>

#### Collocation

*St M 28/14*                      earne steorue

#### Summary

The two central words in the OE category were *wædle* and *þearf*. *Wædle* does not appear in the AB texts, although it is still used in some eME texts - for example in the *Ormulum* and *Lazamon* - where it carries the sense of poverty. *þearf* is not used with the sense of poverty in the AB texts, although it is used in this way in other eME texts, for example in *Vices and Virtues* as *þearuen*. In the AB texts it is used as a continuation of its OE senses concerning necessity or necessary. Neither of these words which were central in the OE poverty vocabulary appear in the AB poverty

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<sup>109</sup> It is similar to the use of *wrecche* in similar contexts, for example in the South English Legendary, as a form of address from the martyr to the tormentors.

<sup>110</sup> It has the sense ‘poverty’ as sense a. in the *MED* but the only citations are from the *Lambeth Homilies* and the *Proverbs of Alfred*. The *OED* puts the definitions into one strand, as ‘Poverty, wretchedness, misery’ and as the citations are in chronological order it is difficult to separate the strands. See note on *Lazamon*’s use of *earm*.



vocabulary.

*Earm* is used in the Saints' lives only with reference to the enemies of Christ, and once in *AW* in a quotation from Augustine translated from Latin. It otherwise appears only in *HM* where it refers to misery associated with the earthly life. There is another instance which is in a passage concerning worldly wealth, and two further instances of the phrase *earm hwile* referring to troubled times in the bringing up of children. It is striking that the other AB texts have a wide range of words for misery and suffering but *earm* is not part of this vocabulary.

Clothing the poor is one of the manifestations of alms and *nakede* is used to stand for the poor in *St Katerine* collocating with *neodfule*. It is also used as 'lacking in something' which does not seem to have been present in OE use and is the earliest citation of this sense in the *MED*. The phrase *steort naket* is used of Christ and the saints in their martyrdom. These are the earliest attestations of this phrase in the *MED* and it does not seem to have been used in OE although *stert* 'tail' is an OE word. In *AW* *steort naket* is used with the verb *despuilet* which has violent connotations, and it is associated with loss of power in a citation from a later period. Christ's nakedness is presented as a sign of his poverty on earth, which is discussed more fully in the consideration of *pouerte* in the later section.

Housing the poor is another of the obligations of alms and in the passage on Christ's poverty on earth *nearow* is the word used to express the poverty that was shown by the nature of his lodging in Mary's womb and in the physical surroundings of his birth, life and death. The anchoresses' experience is intended to mirror Christ's poverty and the *nearowðe* of their dwelling is shown in this light. The implications of this for the definition of poverty in the AB texts is discussed more fully in the section on *pouerte*. Had it not been in the *TOE* category *nearones* would not have been included in this study as it does not meet any of the criteria of definition, synonymy and so on. It appears in context, however, to play a central role and it forms part of the definition of the concept 'poverty' as part of the encyclopedic knowledge or frame.

*Nede* was a very minor part of the OE poverty vocabulary, with its presence largely in the concepts of necessity and generalised need, the definition being supplied by the naming of the thing ‘needed’. This continues in the AB texts except for the eME rise of the word *neodful/e* which is part of the category ‘poverty’ in the AB texts and is collocated with *poure*.

### **Words from OE but not in the *TOE* poverty category**

There are seven words which are part of the AB vocabulary of ‘poverty’ which are from OE but which are not part of the *TOE* category of ‘poverty’:

<i>wac</i>	32
<i>wrecche</i>	32
<i>wone</i>	18
<i>eðelich</i>	14
<i>helples</i>	5
<i>godles</i>	3
<i>mistrum</i>	1

#### ***wac***

There are thirty two instances in the AB texts. This does not appear in the glossary with a sense ‘poor’ or ‘poverty’ and its collocation - with *eðelich* and *wrecche* - is the criterion for inclusion.

### Material poverty

There are no instances with this sense in the AB texts.

### Inadequate/insignificant

#### i. With a moral or spiritual component

The foes that surround mankind are portrayed as searching for man's weakness so they can lead men in to sin. Indeed, when the devil led Eve into the first sin, it was her weakness that he played on:

7 swa þe feond þurh hire word understod anan riht hire wacnesse  
and so the fiend, through what she said, understood her (Eve's)  
weakness immediately

AW 35 16a/12

*Wac* is used as an adjective of the things that lead us in to sin, *wac wes min heorte* 'my heart was weak' (AW 164 87a/18); in *HM* it is *wac wil* 'weak will'<sup>111</sup> that causes a fall into the devil's power and beneath it all it is *þe ilke wake cunde* 'that weak nature' which draws man into sin (AW 5/8).

The instrument of temptation can also be described as weak:

Of mon þ. 3e misleueð þurh his fol semblant oðer bi his wake wordes.^

From someone you mistrust because of his foolish manner or weak words . . .

AW 213 112b/21

Here the weakness is not that of the sinner, but of the words used to lure her into sin,

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<sup>111</sup> In *HM* 7/19, 20/30



and sinful thoughts themselves are described as *wake*<sup>112</sup>.

ii. With a financial component

Millett gives ‘poor’ as the gloss for *wac* in:

drehen se moni wa for se wac hure as þe worlt forʒelt euer

bearing so many miseries for such poor wages as the world always pays<sup>113</sup>

*HM* 3/8

This is cited in the *OED* as sense c. ‘Lowly in status or degree; insignificant’ but without differentiation. Here *wac* is associated with the rewards of earth as opposed to heaven. The connection with material value appears again in *Ureisun*<sup>114</sup> :

me nis he fol chapmon þe buþ deore a wac þing

But is he not a foolish chapman that buyeth dear a worthless article

*Ureisun* [L]. 2/31

There seems to be a connotation of the material transaction inherent in marriage in *Hali Meiðhad*:

hwet wenest tu of þe poure, þe beoð wacliche iʒeuen ant biset vuele?

what do you expect of the poor, who are wretchedly married and ill

provided for?

*HM* 4/16

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<sup>112</sup> AW 114a/10

<sup>113</sup> Translation from Millett and Wogan-Browne (1992).

<sup>114</sup> There is also a collocation with selling in *eðelich* above.

where a financial connection is in the context. This is discussed more fully in the second section.

#### Literal sense and metaphoric extensions

There is one instance which is used in a physical sense, of a skilful smith making a weak knife (AW 31 13b/2)<sup>115</sup> and it is applied to those who fail to perform the task set, in *St Katerine*, when the Emperor addresses the scholars who were brought in to defeat her in debate as *waccre þen eni wake* ‘weaker than any weak thing’ when they fail.

#### Of the flesh

As with other words in the vocabulary of poverty<sup>116</sup> *wac* is used of the earthly, physical nature of man:

a wrecche bodi 7 a wac bere ich ouer eorðe

A wretched body and a weak (one) I bear on earth

*Wohunge* 587

and it is the weakness of the body that endangers the soul through its frail nature and its desires and hence through sin. There are frequent collocations with *unstrengðe* and it can be difficult in PDE to distinguish between the two words<sup>117</sup>. This is discussed more fully in the second section.

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<sup>115</sup> Ives (1934) considers this to be a popular proverb, although unable to find a parallel.

<sup>116</sup> See *earm*, *eðlich*, *wrecche* etc.

<sup>117</sup> It is easier where both are nouns as ‘lack of strength’ and ‘weakness’: AW 62b/23 *mucheþe unstrengðe 7 ure wacnesse* and AW 76b/26 *þin ahne wacnesse 7 of þin unstrengðe*

## Humility

In AW reasons are given why God might withdraw from man for man's own good.

One of these is so that man might know *ure muchele unstrengðe 7 ure wacnesse* 'our great lack of strength and our weakness'<sup>118</sup> and there are references to the necessity of regarding ourselves as 'weak'.<sup>119</sup> This self assessment is fundamental:

þis fallunge is eadmod cnawunge of þin ahne wacnesse. 7 of þin unstrengðe

This falling is humble knowledge of your own weakness and  
of your lack of strength.

AW 145 76b/26

*Wac* has this context of humility in common with other items in the vocabulary of poverty.<sup>120</sup> As with those, it is self knowledge, self assessment as weak that is humility and which paradoxically becomes strength. This is discussed more fully in the second section.

## Collocation

AW 62b/23	unstrengðe 7 ure wacnesse
AW 62b/26	wrecchehead 7 his wacnesse
AW 73a/25	to wake 7 to unwreaste
AW 75b/19	wake unstrengðe
AW 76a/4	wake cunde

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<sup>118</sup> AW 62b/26

<sup>119</sup> AW 11 4a/8, SW 98/2 77r/15

<sup>120</sup> See *eðelich*, *lah* etc



<i>AW</i> 76b/26	wacnesse . . . unstrengðe
<i>AW</i> 112b/21	wake words
<i>AW</i> 114a/10	wac þohtes
<i>HM</i> 7/19	wac wil
<i>HM</i> 20/30	wac wil
<i>HM</i> 3/8	wac hure
<i>SW</i> 253/177	eðeliche ant wake
<i>Wohunge</i> 587	a wrecche bodi 7 a wac

#### Antonym

<i>AW</i> 47b/24	þe gode . . . þe wake
<i>Ureisun</i> [L]. 31	bup feore awac þing

#### *wrecche*

There are thirty two instances of *wrecche*. Other eME texts contain *wrecche* in contexts where it is clear that it was a translation for the OE items *wædla* or *þearfa*<sup>121</sup> with the clear sense of of ‘material poverty’ or ‘poor in spirit’ . Its use in the AB texts has echoes of this sense.

#### Material poverty

*Wrecche* seems to be used in the sense ‘material poverty’. There is one instance:

þe wrecche poure peoddere mare nurð he madeð . . .

<sup>121</sup> See separate chapter on *Peterborough Chronicle*, Ælfric items in Bodley 343, *Trinity Homilies* etc. and in the *Lambeth Homilies* *wrecche* is used to translate Latin *pauper*

þen þe riche mercier

The wretched poor peddlar makes more noise . . .

than the rich merchant

AW (Corpus) 36 16a/25

Here the contrast is between the poor pedlar and the rich merchant and the sense ‘materially poor’ is carried by *poure* but Nero omits *poure*, possibly as *wrecche* still carries sufficient connotations to retain the sense:

þe wreche peoddare more noise he makeð . . .

þen a riche mercer

AW (Nero) 29 15v/6-7

and the antonymic pair are *wreche* and *riche*.

There is an instance, also in *AW* where *wrecche* is associated with begging for alms:

wið þus anewil ropunge halseð efter sum help to þe wrecche meoseise

With this constant beseeching she implores some help

for a distressed wretch.

AW 169 89b/13.

Here *meoseise* is another member of the ‘poverty’ category and the translation is difficult. *Meoseise* has senses of physical discomfort and sickness, as well as poverty as *wrecche* has its own range of senses, some of which overlap with *meoseise*.

There is an instance in which Christ’s earthly condition, his incarnation and his

poverty, are expressed through the use of *wrecched*:

Ihesu mi liues luue riche ar tu as lauerd in heuene 7 in eorðe.

7 tah poure þi bicom for me . westi 7 wrecched

Jesu, my life's love, you are rich as the Lord in heaven and earth,

and yet you became poor for me, destitute and wretched

*Wohunge 319*

Here the antonyms are *poure . . . westi 7 wrecched* and *riche* in close collocation.

#### Of the flesh

As with other items in the AB vocabulary of poverty<sup>122</sup> *wrecche* is associated with the physical world and applied to the body:

a wrecche bodi 7 a wac bere ich ouer eorðe

A wretched body and a weak (one) I bear on earth

*Wohunge 587*

There is also a more generalised use in which *wrecche* seems to express the earthly state as opposed to the heavenly.<sup>123</sup>

#### Sin, hell and the opponents of Christ

*Wrecche* has a strong association with sin and hell. In *SW* it is used in connection with hell:

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<sup>122</sup> As is *earm*, *wac* etc.

<sup>123</sup> *AW 173 91b/22, AW 173 91b/22 .*



ful of sorhe untalelich, for ne mei na  
muð for wrecchedom ne for wa rikenin hit ne tellen  
full of unutterable sorrow, for no mouth may, on account  
of the wretchedness and the woe, give an account  
of it nor tell about it.

*SW 90/28*

There are many instances when it is used of sinners themselves, (*AW 183 97a/24*) and while this could be a use expressing generalised misery or contempt this is not the only association with sinners<sup>124</sup> and in many the context seems clear:

ant willes ant waldes warpe me as wrecche i þi leirwite  
and cast myself as a wretch of my own accord into your punishment  
for fornication

*HM 23/23*

There are strong connotations of evil attached to *wrecche* in the AB texts, particularly in the *Saints' Lives* where the term is applied to the enemies of the saints and therefore of Christ. Perhaps this is a continuation of its *TOE* categories **16.01.05.02.01 The Devil** and **16.01.05.02.02 Other terms for devils**:

O qð ha Iuliene ihesu cristes leof  
mon þreates tu me wrecche?  
"Oh", said Iuliene, Jesus Christ's beloved,  
"are you threatening me, you wretch?"

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<sup>124</sup> 8 instances out of 31 are clear, and others seem to contain the component of sin.

*St Iu.* B 444

In this context the saint is addressing the devil Belial. It is a common form of address in the saints' lives from Christians to all those heathens who torment them and attack Christ's followers:<sup>125</sup>

ant weorp hire biuoren þen awariede wulf ant 3eide lut-steuene:

‘Wrecche mon þet tu hit art!

and threw herself (the queen) before the accursed wolf (Maxence)

and cried in a loud voice ‘Wretched man that you are’

*St K B* 741

This may also be a development of the OE use expressed in the *TOE* category **12.08.06.02.02 A bad man, an inhuman person** and is reflected in the *MED* in the senses ‘vile’ and ‘base’.

### Earthly

It is surprising in the context of the apparent association of this word with sin and devils that *wrecche* is also used of Christ. It is given a nice balance in *Ureisun* where Christ made himself *wrecche* as inherent in the earthly state he adopted:

ase þu makedest te her wreche . for us wreches.

even as wretched as you made yourself for us wretches

*Ureisun* [L.] 56

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<sup>125</sup> This seems to be a common feature in saints' lives in Middle English, for example it is also used in the *South English Legendary*

In this context word choice is affected by alliteration and balance, but being *wrecche* is inherent in man's condition on earth. That this can be applied to Christ underlines that the boundaries of these words are fuzzy or ambiguous at times, and apparently opposite qualities can be expressed through the same item.

#### Collocation

AW 16a/25	wrecche poure
AW 62b/26	wrecchehead 7 his wacnesse
AW 89b/13	wrecche meoseise
AW 90b/9	wrecche beast
AW 97a/24	wrecche sunfule
AW 98a/3	wrecches sunfule
AW 105a/7	lahe wrecches
Wohunge 319	poure, westi 7 wrecched

#### Antonymn

AW 91b/22	þe hali mon . . . us wrecches
Wohunge 319	riche

#### *wone*

There are eighteen instances of *wone*. It is glossed by d'Ardenne and Dobson (1981) as 'want, need, poverty' and has *weole* as an antonym.

#### Material poverty

In the AB texts *weole* is the most common term for 'material wealth' (Bately 1998) and here it is an antonym to *wone*:



ich bidde ðe  
 ðet ich mote under uon in obedience boðe  
 wone 7 weole þe ine cwemnesse  
 I pray that I may receive in obedience, both  
 poverty and wealth with contentment.

*LofLouerde 126*

*Wone* is one of the sufferings on earth and when St Katerine is about to die she asks God to hear the prayers of anyone who calls upon her in their suffering from *al uuel weorre 7 wone baðe. 7 untidi wederes*. ‘drive off all evil from them, both war and want, and untimely weather’ (*St K. T.* 1647) where d’Ardenne and Dobson (1981) gloss *wone* ‘want, need, poverty’.

### Lacking in

The OE sense of ‘a lack of’ continues in the AB texts. This can be a lack of something abstract such as *god* ‘good’ (*AW* 7a/8) or *wunne* ‘bliss’ (*SW* 253/187) or neutral such as *witnesse* ‘a witness’ (*AW* 17a/10). A specific sense which is mirrored directly in OE usage<sup>126</sup> is the description of Saint Katerine’s age as:

twæ wone of twenti  
 two (years) short of twenty

*St K B.* 23

The phrase *wædl hlafes* ‘lack of bread’ (*Greg. Dial.* 2 21) in OE is also mirrored in a direct sense in:

<sup>126</sup> TOE 10.02 **Want, lack** .One less than (with numerals): *ānes wan* (*þe . . .*).

ant te breades wone brede þi bearn-team  
and bring forth your children to lack of bread

*HM 15/18*

The things lacking can be material needs:

þoledes for wone of mete moni hat hungre  
suffered for lack of meat many a sharp (pang of) hunger

*Wohunge 337*

and this lack of material needs can become poverty:

God hit wot, moni oðer wot lutel of þisse eise, auh beoð ful  
ofte i derued mid wone & mid scheome & mid teone.  
God knows there are many others who know little of such  
convenience, and are often afflicted with want, indignity and vexation.

*AW 85/18 Nero*

Here the anchoresses are compared to others who are less well supported materially.

#### Collocation

<i>AW 31a/28</i>	pine 7 wone . . . meoseises
<i>St Iu 878</i>	uuel weorre ant wone
<i>SW 253/187</i>	nowcin . . . wone of wunne

Antonym

AW 71b/14                      wone . . . prude

*LofLauerd* 128                wone 7 weole

### *eðelich*

There are fourteen instances of *eðelich*. It is included because *MED* sense 2 is ‘Of low rank, lowly, poor’ with citations from the *Lambeth Homilies*, *HM* and *SW*<sup>127</sup>. It also collocates with *wac* and *lah*.

I have included the sense ‘humility’ for *eðelich*, from contextual evidence, and although this sense does not appear in the *MED* and *OED* it is interesting that *ēaþmōd* appears in *TOE* categories **07.07 Humility**, **12.01.01.12.01 Obedience, service**, and the Christian context is also present in the *TOE* in **16.01.01.01 Attributes of God** **..Gracious: ēaþmōd**, so these would not be new overtones for *ēaþ-*.

Others of these *TOE* senses which are not reflected in the *MED* and *OED* are ‘insufficiency, lack, want’ and ‘sensual pleasure’. ‘Sensual pleasure’ appears to be present in the AB texts, but not ‘insufficiency, lack, want’.

### Material poverty

There appears to me to be no instance with the clear sense material poverty. I have not read any of the AB citations as ‘material poverty’.

### Inadequate, insufficient

i. Frail or weak physically

*MED* sense 3. *frail or weak (physically or morally)* is one of the senses in the AB texts, *eðelich* is used of ‘physical frailty’ as in *Sum is ald 7 eðelich* ‘One is old and

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<sup>127</sup> *SW* 254/217 and *HM* 4/18



frail' (AW 7 2a/14). There is an interesting instance where the sense in glossaries is commonly given as 'easy', which has a precedent in the OE usage, but which could also carry the component of 'frail/weak':

7 leac forð. 7 heo wes eðluke.

and pulled (her) forth and she was easy (to drag) (frequent translation)

and pulled her forth and she was frail/weak (my translation)

*St Iu B. 690*

here the translation 'frail/weak physically' would not involve a change of the adjective into an adverb and the requirement of the verb in brackets in order to clarify the PDE sense.<sup>128</sup>

## ii. Frail or weak morally

The polysemy present in the PDE 'poor' is apparent in the common gloss for *eðelich* in:

for nis his strengðe noht wurð bute hwer se he

ifindeð eðeliche ant wake

for his (the devil's) strength prevails not, except wheresoever he

finds them frail and weak (my translation)

finds them poor and weak (frequent translation)

*SW 94/30*

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<sup>128</sup> Suggested by Louise Sylvester.

where poor carries the sense of ‘inadequate/frail’. This is also found in translations of the phrase *eðelich ant unwurð* as ‘poor and worthless’ in *HM* 22/28 describing virginity without humility.

Of low value, insignificant

i. With a physical component:

*An eðelich stiche :*

an eðelich stiche oðer eche makeð to understonden hu lutel prude is wurð

An insignificant pain or ache makes one understand how little pride is worth

*AW* 145 77a/9

ii. With a moral component

In a context concerned with ‘putting a low value’ on something is:

Ne tele þu nawt eðelich, al beo þu meiden, to widewen ne to iweddede.

Do not undervalue, though you may be a virgin, widows and married women.

*HM* 21/32

iii. With a financial component

The idea of *eðelich* as something undervalued is present in *AW* where *eðelich* is used in the context of selling the soul to the devil:<sup>129</sup>

ne sule þu neauer se eðeliche his fa 7 þin eiðer his deorewurðe spuse

never sell so cheaply to his foe and yours, God’s precious bride

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<sup>129</sup> *Wac* also has a sense that specifically expresses a financial value

Of low rank

In *Saint Iulienne* Eleusius wishes to marry the saint and obtains the prefecture of Rome to please her. When she refuses him, her father says of this high rank:

hit is na eðelich þing. þe refschiþe of rome

it is not an inconsiderable thing, the prefecture of Rome

*St Iu B. 99*

Here *eðelich* refers to its components of insignificance and triviality but also plays on its sense of low rank.

In *HM* there are two instances in which *eðelich* is used to describe a husband in negative terms where his low rank appears to be a factor:

ant se oft beon imaket earm of an eðlich mon þet tu list under

and be made wretched so often by the worthless man you are subject to

*HM 3/35*

The women who are the subject of this passage are the rich, *þes cwenes*, *þes riche cuntasses* ‘these queens, these rich countesses’ and the comparison appears to be made with Christ. The passage continues with a discussion of the situation for the poor where the husband is described as *eðeluker* (*HM 4/18*). This is discussed more fully below in the section on context.



## Humility

To be *eðelich* is desirable when it refers to the humility God wants in man:

Pe rihtwise Godd wule þet we demen us seolf eðeliche ant lahe

The righteous God will that we deem ourselves poor and low

*SW* 96/31

*Lahe* and *eðliche* appear to be a common collocation particularly in this context - appearing in *SW* and in the *Trinity Homilies*.<sup>130</sup>

It is interesting, as noted earlier, that *ēapmōd* appears in *TOE* categories **07.07 Humility, 12.01.01.12.01 Obedience, service, and 16.01.01.01 Attributes of God** so this is not a new sense for *ēap-*.

## Peripheral senses

### Sensual pleasure

Although *eðelich* is commonly glossed as ‘worthless’ in this citation, and this does make sense, this OE sense could be present in this context in *HM* where losing virginity is said to be for the sake of:

eðelich delit of an hondhwile

worthless momentary pleasure (usual translation)

momentary sensual pleasure (my suggestion)

*HM* 5/15

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<sup>130</sup> In AB texts *eðelich* collocates once with *ald*, *once wake*; twice with *unwurð*, twice *lahe*;

### Collocation

<i>AW</i> 2a/14	ald 7 eðelich
<i>AW</i> 76b/28	lutel tale 7 unwurð 7 eðelich
<i>HM</i> 22/28	eðelich ant unwurð
<i>HM</i> 22/5	lahe ant eðliche
<i>SW</i> 94/30	eðeliche ant wake
<i>SW</i> 96/31	eðeliche ant lahe

### Antonym

<i>AW</i> 79b/2	eðeliche . . . deorewurðe
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### *helples*

There are five instances of *helples*. It is glossed ‘destitute’ by d’Ardenne (1961) and so is included. It carries this sense at this period as in the *OED*.<sup>131</sup> However, in some ways this appears to be a difficult word to define, in that any attempt to reach a definition becomes circular returning to phrases using the positive antonym such as ‘without help’ or explanatory definitions ‘having no assistance from others’. It is interesting that there are only this, *godles* (which follows) and *meoseise* that appear as negative words in this poverty category, that is to say that are words made negative by an affix to denote their sense, and none of them last or are widespread<sup>132</sup>.

### Material poverty

There are no clear instances that carry the sense material poverty.

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<sup>131</sup> 1. ‘Destitute of help; having no assistance from others; needy’. (Of persons, their condition, etc.)

<sup>132</sup> Although another negative form of *eise* does survive in *disease*.

Without help, destitute

The following *St Iulienne* citation is given in the *MED* for sense (c) ‘without support, abandoned, alone, companionless’ although the gloss in d’Ardenne’s edition of *St Iulienne* gives ‘without help, destitute’ as in *helpeleses* ‘of the destitute’. *St Iulienne* addresses Christ as:

helpeleses heale

*St Iu* B. 305

This is part of a phrase about Christ used also in *Ureisun*:

eafter him alle helpeleses help

help of all helpless

*Ureisun* [L]. 4/105

this is reminiscent of the use of *neodfulles help*.<sup>133</sup>

Unable to assist oneself

A more general use is:

Pu art foster 7 feader; to helplese children.

you are foster-parent and father to helpless children

*St M* 18/29

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<sup>133</sup> *ase þu ert neodfulles help* Lof Lauerd 87 This is cited in the *MED* for sense e. ‘doomed, hopeless’; - also as noun. Citations include a1250 *Orison Lord* (Lamb. 487) 189: *Pu þet ert eafter him alle helpeleses help*. c1390 *Talking LGod* (Vrn) 56/1: *Mooder of Merci, Help of alle helplese*.



where the component of powerlessness appears to be present. There is a similar connotation in *Lofsong of Ure Louerde* which refers to the speaker *red me þ. am helples* and another which refers to being unable to maintain oneself in the world:

nab ich hwaremide leden mi lif ipisse worlde 7 am helples.

I have not the means to lead my life in this world, and am helpless.

*LofL* 12/79

The *OED* also gives sense 1 b. ‘destitute (of)’<sup>134</sup> which is parallel to one of the senses of *naket*, but the earliest citation given is *Piers Plowman* (1362).

Collocation

*Lofsong of ure Louerde* 85helples 7 redles

### ***godles***

There are three instances of *godles* and the citations in *MED* sense (b) ‘poor, poverty-stricken’ are from *HM*.

### **Material poverty**

The instances are all from *Hali Meiðhad*.<sup>135</sup>

þet tu nabbe . . . . ne weole nowðer, ant schalt granin godles

so that you do not have . . . . riches either and must pine away in poverty

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<sup>134</sup> There are only two citations, separate in time, one from *Piers Plowman* and one from Dryden.

<sup>135</sup> Also ‘of a wood: barren’; with a citation from *Poema Morale*

Here *godles* is an antonym to *weole* which is used for ‘wealth, riches’ in the AB texts.<sup>136</sup> The next instance is cited by *MED* to illustrate sense (a) ‘Worthless, useless’ but I would argue that this also belongs in sense (b) ‘poor, poverty-stricken’. The context is a discussion of an earthly man’s role in providing materially for his wife. The brides of Christ do not need material provision, and are in fact more wealthy, both here and in heaven. All the wealth (*weole*) of the world is at their disposal and no earthly misfortune can deprive them of it as they are *riche* and *weolefule* in the heart where:

as þe oðre beoð godlese ant ignahene

where the others are poor and consumed with anxiety

They are *riche* and *weolefule* in the heart where others are *godlese* and are *ignahene* ‘anxious’. Here *godlese* contrasts with *riche* and seems to me to mean *poor* as Millett glosses it (EETS 284 1982).<sup>137</sup>

#### Peripheral sense

Without good

This, from *St Katherine*, seems to be similar to the *TOE* sense, and is cited for *MED* sense (a) ‘Worthless, useless’:

<sup>136</sup> Particularly in the Katherine Group - Bately (1998)

<sup>137</sup> Millett EETS (1982) glossary *godles* adj. ‘impoverished’ note p. 42/3 on 14/31-3 she suggests ‘All the joy and all the comfort is there [in the heart], where the others are poor . . .’

þe þuncheð se greate ant beoð godlese þah antbeare of euch blisse  
which seem so great and yet are without good(ness) (worthless?)

*St K. B 313*

#### Collocation

*HM 14/32*                      godlese ant ignahene

#### Antonym

*St K. B. 313*                      greate . . . godlese

*HM 15/18*                      weole . . . godles

*HM 14/32*                      riche ant weoleful . . . godlese ant ignahene

#### *mistrum*

This is only instance recorded. It is included because its definition in the *MED* is ‘Of a meal: scant, poor’. This reflects the extensions of the ‘poverty’ category into areas of ‘inadequacy’ and ‘lack’.

#### Material poverty

There is only one instance and it does not carry the sense material poverty. It does carry what is a central sense in this category however, and its definition and its translation in glossaries is ‘poor’ because ‘poor’ in PDE continues to carry this sense:

#### Inadequate, insufficient

The citation is:



hwa gruccheð 3ef ha þencheð wel heron mistrum mele of  
unsauuree metes. of poure pitance.

who will grumble, if they think about this well, about an inadequate meal  
of tasteless food, of a poor pittance?

AW 134 71a/23

The context is a passage against gluttony and the sense seems to be ‘inadequate, insufficient’. This phrase *poure pitance* occurs several times in *AW* and illustrates *MED poure* sense 5 (a) ‘Small, insufficient; of intelligence: limited, inadequate’, although from a different passage in *AW*.<sup>138</sup>

#### Collocation

AW 71a/23                      mistrum mele . . . poure pitance

#### Summary

*Wac* is included because it collocates with *eðelich* and *wrecche*. I then looked at its appearance in the *TOE* categories and it is interesting that while it does not appear in the *TOE* ‘poverty’ category, the modern English metalanguage of the categories it inhabits includes the word ‘poor’. This reflects its sense ‘inadequate’ and it shares senses with other items from the AB ‘poverty’ category such as: ‘inadequate with a financial component’ and in marriage; being used of the flesh as opposed to the spirit; and having the context of humility.

*Wrecche* has considerable polysemy in OE and adds more senses into early Middle English. In the early Middle English period it is used clearly as a replacement for *wædle* and *þearfa* and carries the sense ‘material poverty’ as well as ‘poor in spirit’. In the AB texts it seems to be partly replaced by *poure* in these senses

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<sup>138</sup> See section on *poure* below

illustrated by one instance in *AW* where the Corpus version has *wrecche poure* while Nero has only *wrecche*, possibly because *wrecche* still carried sufficient meaning to stand alone (*AW* Corpus 36 16a/25/Nero 29 15v/6-7). *Wrecche* continues its negative senses into early Middle English, being used of hell, sin and sinners and the opponents of Christ in the *AB* texts. It is, surprisingly given these negative contexts, also used of Christ but only in *The Wooing Group*. It may be that its extensive and growing polysemy, which includes negative connotations, was a factor in its replacement by *poure*.

In the *TOE* *wone* has many connections with items in the ‘poverty’ category and although it does not appear there it is present as an element in compound words. Its definitions in the *OED* and the *MED* for the thirteenth century include ‘poverty’. It is also used in the *AB* texts as an antonym to *weole*. Its OE sense ‘lack of’ continues into the *AB* texts where it shares the neutrality of *nede* in that the context is supplied by the object that is lacked. Strikingly it is used in an almost exact echo of its OE use: *TOE* 10.02 .One less than with numerals: *twa wone of twenti St K. B. 23*. It also is used as a replacement of *wædle* in the parallel *wædla hlafes* and *wone bred*.

The *MED* sense 2 ‘of low rank, lowly, poor’ for *eðelich*, illustrated with citations from *HM* and *SW*, and its collocation with *wac* and *lah* are the reasons for its inclusion. There are interesting links in the *TOE* between *eðelich* and other items from the *TOE* ‘poverty’ category. It shares *TOE* 03.03.04.05 **Insufficiency, lack, want** with *wædle* and this is one of only two categories that *wædle* appears in outside the ‘poverty’ category. It does not, however, seem to carry this sense in the *AB* texts. It also shares the *TOE* category 11.08.04 **Vanity, idleness, frivolity** with *lodrung*<sup>o8</sup> (connected to *loddere* in the *TOE* poverty category) although in different subcategories. I have identified ‘humility’ as a context and this is not a new sense for *ēap-* as it appears in *TOE* category 07.07 **Humility**. ‘Poor’ appears in the metalanguage in the *TOE* categories for *wac* and similarly glosses and translations for *eðelich* use ‘poor’, for example of *SW* 253/177 and *HM* 22/28. There do not appear to



be any instances of ‘material poverty’ but several of physical and moral frailty and inadequacy with a ‘selling’ component as in selling a soul to the devil. *Lah* and *eðelich* form a common collocation in the AB texts and other contemporary texts.

*Helples* does not appear to be extant in OE although its positive form, *help*, is. The *OED* includes ‘needy’ in its definition and it is glossed ‘destitute’ by d’Ardenne (1961) in *St Iu*. B. 305. It goes on to gather the sense ‘destitute of’ in *OED* sense 1b. but the earliest citation for this is *Piers Plowman*. It is one of only three words in the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary which are formed from a positive word with a negative affix. The other two are *godles* and *meoseise* and none of them last into PDE.

In OE *godles* meant ‘without good’ but in AB texts it means ‘without goods’. The *MED* gives b. ‘Poor, poverty stricken’ with citations from the AB texts and Chaucer. In the AB texts the antonym is *weole* which is one of the central AB words for ‘wealth’ so it appears to carry a central sense.

The only extant instance of *mistrum* is this in *AW*. It collocates with *poure* and appears to mean ‘inadequate’.

## Words from ON

<i>lah</i>	46
<i>wontreaðe</i>	14
<i>nowcin</i>	11

*wont/en* is also considered but not included (see appendix)



## *lah*

There are forty-six instances of *lah* and it is included because the *MED* has under sense 5 (a) c ‘low in fortunes, state, or condition; poor; unfortunate’ etc. with the citation from *SW* 256/290 below. It also collocates with *eðelich*, *poure* and *wrecche*.

### Material poverty

There do not seem to be any instances with the sense material poverty in the AB texts

### Literal sense and metaphoric extension

#### i. Literal

In the AB texts *lahe* is used in its purely literal sense rarely, in comparison with the figurative overtones that it more usually carries,<sup>139</sup> for example:

hare her beo i coruen hare heaued clað sitte lahe

Let their hair be cut short, their head-cloths come low down

AW 218 115b/18

#### ii. Of position in a hierarchy

The antonym to *lahe* in every case is *heh* and the extension from a literal sense to one expressing relative position in a social, emotional or other figurative sense is a common one.

##### a. Of social hierarchy

There are two instances<sup>140</sup> which refer to the ranking of people, where a society

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<sup>139</sup> This and AW 103a/12, 115b/20 which three are the only purely literal senses out of 46 instances that I have found in the AB texts.

<sup>140</sup> And AW 52b/8

ordered in status requires obedience from *Euch lahre his herre* ‘every inferior his superior’ AW 102 52b/17.

St Iulienne attempts to divert Eleusius from his pursuit of her by using status:

sende him to seggen. þ. nalde ha lihten swa lahe

send him to say that she did not wish to stoop so low as to love him

*St Iu* 6/39

until he became, next to the Emperor, the highest in Rome.

In *OED* sense 2e the extension into ‘making a low bow’ is given, illustrated with a first citation from 1548<sup>141</sup>. This extension appears in this same sense in the AB texts and is part of *MED* sense 1d. of the adverb. There is one instance in AW:

7 underuon þe peitence þ. ha leið up on hire lutinde hire lahe.

and accept the penance that she lays upon them, bowing low to her.

AW 219 116a/3

which occurs in a discussion of the treatment that is appropriate for the two women who serve the anchoress. *Lahe* is used twice more in this passage of the behaviour of the women, who are lower in earthly and, presumably, in spiritual rank than the anchoress they serve.<sup>142</sup> There appears to be an element of *submission* to a higher power in such *low bowing*. There is also one instance describing Saint Marharet’s bow to Christ. (*St M.* B. 30/3).

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<sup>141</sup> 2e. Of an obeisance: Profound, deep’ first citation a1548 Hall *Chron.*, Edw. IV 234

<sup>142</sup> Once in the citation above on headcloths, 115b/18, and in 115b/20 on keeping the eyes down.

b. Of the hierarchy of creation

*Lahe* and *heh* are used of the social hierarchy, but in the hierarchy of creation after the Fall man is lower than the angels and the beasts are lower than man. Satan falls the lowest:

of parais lihte se lahe

(Satan) from Paradise fell so low

*St M. B. 38/19*

and the inhabitants of hell are at the bottom of the hierarchy (*St M. 34/16*). This sense in which lowness is a part of the hierarchy of society and creation come together:

Nu þu art iweddēt, ant of se heh se lahe iliht - of englene ilicnesse . . . .

into beastes liflade, into monnes þeowdom

Now you are married, and have descended so low from so high - from the likeness of angels . . . . into the life of an animal, into servitude to a man

*HM 12/11*

iii. Base

There is one instance where *lahe* appears to carry the connotation of disapproval:

. . isanful frommardschipe. lah þing i religiun. for hit to warpeð annesse

7 manere imeane.^

. . individual difference - a base thing in religion, for it shatters unity

and the common manner

*AW 130 69a/23*



iv. To lay/lie low

The demon submits to the superior power of the saint and refers to St Marharet's triumph over him:

of hwet cunde kimeð þe þi luue 7 ti bileaue þet leið me se lahe

What is the source of your love and your faith, which lay me so low?

*St M. B. 38/6*

There is collocation with the verb *leggen* 'to lay' or *liggen* 'to lie' forming a phrase still in use in current English.

Of the flesh and the earthly life

i. Of earthly (as opposed to spiritual) life:

There is a widespread use of *lahe* to denote the distinction between 'earthly' and 'heavenly' life. This is a feature of other items in the eME vocabulary of poverty where, as with *lahe*, use includes the distinction between 'earthly' and 'heavenly' life as well as between the *lahe* 'physical - the body' and the *heh* 'spiritual - the soul'.<sup>143</sup>

The earthly as opposed to heavenly distinction is clearly made:

7 forleoseð þe luue nawt ane of heh in heouene ah of lah hec on eorðe

and lose the love not only of those who are high in heaven but of those too

who livelow on earth

*St M B. 34/14*

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<sup>143</sup> As in *earm*, *wrecche* etc.

ii. Of the body/flesh

As the earth is ‘low’ in the hierarchy, the fleshly part of man is also ‘low’.

se unimete lah þing . . . . schal drahen in to sunne.^ se unimete heh þing  
that so immeasurably low a thing (the body) . . . . has to draw into sin so  
immeasurably high a thing (the soul)

*AW 73 38a/22*

As in much eME writing distaste for the flesh and its appetites is strong and here, as elsewhere, poverty vocabulary is used to express this. In *HM* it is clear that sexual activity of itself condemns women *ase flesches prealles . . . wunieð lahe on eorðe* ‘as slaves of the flesh live low on earth’ *HM* 2/8 they live low in comparison with the high tower on which live the virgins.

Humility

It is then surprising to find, also in *HM*, Mary being addressed by Gabriel, described as *lah*:

loke hu lah ha lette hire  
look how low she valued herself

*HM 22/19*

This is the paradox also found in other words from the eME vocabulary of poverty<sup>144</sup> in which negative connotations become positive when the context is that of

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<sup>144</sup> For example, *eðlich*, *wac*, *poure*

self evaluation, as this then becomes humility.<sup>145</sup> Humility is specifically defined using *lah* in AW:

eadmodnesse is forkeastunge of wurðschipe 7 luue of lutel hereword

7 of lahnesse

humility is rejecting of honour and love of little praise and of lowness

AW 144 76a/15

The apostles on earth show this humility:

Ich iseh þe apostles,

poure ant lah on eorðe

I saw the Apostles (that were) poor and low on earth

SW 100/31

where *lah* and *poure* collocate. Humility is an important element in the AB texts' use of *lahe*.

#### Collocation

AW 69 35b/26                      lah þurh milde eadmodnesse

HM 22/5                              lahe ant eðliche

SW 254/217                        eðeliche ant lahe

AW 145 76b/20                    lutle 7 of lahe lif

SW 100/31                          poure ant lah

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<sup>145</sup> A parallel is found in the positive connotation when used as a religious metaphor, for words which are otherwise negative, such as *þeow* and slavery words as noted by Elizabeth Stevens Girsch (1994)



<i>AW</i> 183 97a/19	a3ein scheome 7 lahscipe
<i>HM</i> 2/8	ase flesches þrealles . . . worldes þeowdom. . . lahe
<i>AW</i> 198 105a/7	to se lahe wrecches

In the instances I have found in the AB texts there are eighteen antonyms, and each one is a form of *heh* ‘high’. The antithesis of ‘high’ and ‘low’ is commonly found in the Katherine Group and related texts (Shepherd 1991).

There are recurring phrases using *lahe*:

<i>St M</i> 34/14	of heh in heouene ah of lah hec on eorðe
<i>St M</i> 34/16	þe heste in heouene to þe laheste in helle
<i>HM</i> 2/9	Nawt of lah on eorðe, ah of þe hehe in heouene

### ***wontreaðe***

There are fourteen instances and in the AB texts *wontreaðe* is found in all three groups. It is included because the *OED* definition includes ‘poverty’ giving ‘Misery, distress, hardship; adversity, poverty’ although the *MED* does not.

### **Material povety**

Only one instance seems, from context, to be related to issues of wealth and poverty:

Ant ich hit am. þe reafde þe riche Iob his ahte. swa þ. he weolewede  
of wontreðe i þe mixne  
And I am he who deprived the rich Job of his goods  
so that he wasted away from poverty in the dunghill.

Here *wontreðe* is expressing a condition in which one component is the reversal in fortune from *riche*. Its antonym is *riche*. The other instance is:

louerd

ich ileue hit 7 luuie 7 wulle luuien þe more lo

uerd þurh þis wondred þen er in al mine weole

Lord, I believe it, and love and will love you more, Lord,

through this poverty than I did previously in all my wealth

*LofLouerd* p. 13/107

Here ‘hardship’ would make equal sense as a translation but *weole* is its antonym and this is a common word for ‘wealth’ in the AB texts as noted previously.

### Earthly suffering

*Wontreaðe* is used of earthly suffering generally. This worldly suffering comes from God<sup>146</sup>, and *wontreaðe* is used in this sense:

ure flesch schal blikien schenre þen þe sunne.^ 3ef hit is totoren her

wið wontreaðe 7 wið weane.

our flesh shall shine brighter than the sun , if it is torn to pieces here

with suffering and with grief

*AW* 185 98a/18

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<sup>146</sup> *Godes þreatunge is wontreaðe 7 weane i licome 7 i sawle*  
‘God’s threatening is misery and grief in body and soul’ (*AW* 81 42a/24)

and also of the martyrdom of the saints. Neither pleasure nor *wontreðe* ‘suffering’ can turn the saint aside:

tu ne maht nanes-weis, wið weole ne wið wunne,  
wið wa ne wið wondreðe, wið nan worldlich þing,  
wenden me ne wrenchen ut of þe weie þat ich am in  
bigunnen to ganne.  
you cannot in any way, by riches or pleasure, by pain  
or by suffering, or by any worldly thing, turn me aside  
out of the way that I have begun to walk in.

*St M R. 11/14*

In *HM wontreaðe* is used of the experience of the woman who has chosen an earthly marriage instead of the holy marriage to Christ:

ant hauest ifunden weane þrin ant wontreaðe  
since you have found misery in it and all kinds of hardship

*HM 4/3*

‘Hardship’ and ‘suffering’ could be used equally in these contexts. The concept is of a generalised state.

### Of sin and hell

An aspect of *wontreaðe* which is not always present in the ‘poverty’ vocabulary in the



AB texts is that it is used about 'hell'. In AW there are two instances<sup>147</sup> that refer specifically to hell:

7 in helle wontreaðe echeliche wakien  
and will wake eternally in the misery of hell

AW 110 57b/21

and one in SW where Hell is called:

heatel ham ant heard wan of alle wontreaðes  
horrid home and hard dwelling of all miseries

SW 94/2

Saint Iulene is clear that devils live in the idols worshipped by the heathen, and they will pay back their worshippers with torment, for ever:

For ne wergeð he neauer to wurchen ow al þ. wandreðe world  
á buten ende.

For he will never grow weary of working on you all that misery,  
world without end

*St Iu R. 166*

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<sup>147</sup> And AW 160 84b/27-8 the devil takes sinners *to weane 7 to wontreaðe worlde abuten ende* 'into woe and misery, world without end'.

## Collocation

AW:

81 42a/24	wontreaðe 7 weane
160 84b/27-8	weane 7 to wontreaðe
185 98a/18	wið wontreaðe 7 wið weane

*St K.:*

B. 229	for teone ne for tintreohe ne for na worldliche wontreaðe
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*St Iu.:*

B. 132	for wa ne for wontreaðe
B. 221	of wa 7 of wontreaðe
R. 209	na derf . . nan wondreðe ne . . dute of deaðe

*St M.:*

R. 11/14	wið wa ne wið wondreðe
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## Antonym

<i>St M</i> R. 11/14	weole . . wunne/wa . . wondreðe
<i>St Iu.</i> B. 132	weole . . wunne/wa . . wontreaðe
<i>St Iu.</i> B 366	riche . . . wontreðe
<i>LofLauerd</i> 13/107	wondred . . . weole

## *nowcin*

There are eleven instances of *nowcin* in the AB texts and it is found only in the Katherine Group<sup>148</sup> in *St Katerine*, *St Marharet*, *SW* and *HM*. In the *OED* and the *MED* the only citations are from the *Katherine* Group and *Cursor Mundi*.

<sup>148</sup> So not in *AW* or the *Wohunge* Group, whereas *meseise* is found only in *AW* and the *Wohunge* Group.

### Material poverty

It is found in the context of ‘material poverty’, in *SW* where *Strengðe* ‘Fortitude’ says that if the Devil attacks with soft weapons, such as *weole* ‘riches’ and *wunne* ‘pleasure’, it might be troubling, but that nothing hard:

ne nowcin ne na wone falsi min heorte  
no suffering or want can make my heart false

*SW* 96/2

*Meað* ‘Temperance’ responds:

‘For ba me ah,’ quoð *Meað*, ‘ant for heart of nowcin ant for  
nesche of wunne, dreden ant carien. For moni for to muchel  
heard of wa þet he dreheð forzet ure Lauerd  
‘People should be anxious and concerned about both,’  
Temperance says, ‘the hardness of suffering and softness of pleasure.  
For many forget our Lord because the misery they suffer is too hard to bear.

*SW T.* 96/4 (\*B. wone )

In Temperance’s response *nowcin* stands for the earlier pair *nowcin* and *wone*. It is difficult to identify the components of ‘suffering’ but here *wone* ‘want’ seems to be able to be understood as a component in *nowcin*.

In *St Katerine* the saint, as she is dying, asks for intercession for all suffering people who call upon her:



ant cleopieð to me hwen ha schulen þe derf of deað drehen oðer  
 hwense ha hit eauer doð i neode ant i nowcin, . . . aflei from ham  
 al uuel – weorre ant wone baðe, ant untidi wederes, hunger . . .  
 and call to me when they must undergo the pain of death, or whenever  
 they do it, in need or in suffering . . . drive off all evil from them, both  
 war and want and untimely weather, hunger . . .

*St K B. 877*

This passage seems to underline the sense that *nowcin* involves, through ‘war’, ‘want’, ‘hunger’, ‘untimely weather’ and so on, ‘physical suffering’. It collocates here with *neode*. While *nowcin* has a wider sense than simply ‘material poverty’ it does seem to be able contain this as a component.

#### Earthly suffering

This instance is interesting in the light of the above context because in *St Katherine* the description of the nature of Paradise is:

na niht nis þer neauer, ne neauer na nowcin; ne eileð þer  
 na mon nowðer sorhe ne sar, nowðer heate ne chele, nowðer  
 hunger ne þurst, ne nan ofþunchunge.  
 there is never night there, and never any hardship. No one is afflicted  
 there by sorrow and pain, or heat or cold, or hunger or thirst, or any remorse.

*St K B. 615*

Here *nowcin* seems to be the sum of *sorhe*, *sar*, *heate*, *chele*, *hunger*, *þurst*, and *ofþunchunge*, the extremes of life on earth. It is firmly positioned on earth, and I have

not found an instance where it applies to suffering in hell.

#### Collocation

*St K B 877*      neode . . . nowcin

*SW 96/2*        nowcin . . . wone

*SW 96/4*        neowcins ant eorðliche tintreohen

#### Antonym

*SW 353/187*    nowcin . . . wunne

#### Summary

*Lah* appears to be one of the members of the category which does not carry the central sense but which is present through family resemblance. In the *MED* sense 5c includes 'poor' and it collocates with *eðelich*, *poure* and *wrecche*. In the AB texts it is rarely used in its literal sense but is used of a position in a hierarchy of social position, or in creation where it may be used of hell. It is used of life on earth as opposed to heaven and is used of the flesh. In the context of Mary it has the sense 'humility' and where it is used as self regard 'low' becomes 'humility' for Christians. All its antonyms are *heh*.

The *OED* includes 'poverty' in its definition of *wontreaðe* although the *MED* does not. Both include 'misery' and associated states. It does not collocate with other items from the AB 'poverty' vocabulary, but its antonyms include *riche* and *weole*. It is used in *St Iulienne* of Job's suffering in poverty. It is often used of the suffering of martyrdom, and of suffering on earth that gains heavenly reward. It is specifically used of hell, in *AW* and *SW*.

*Nowcin* only appears in the *Katherine* Group. The *OED* has ‘hardship, distress’ as its sense but the *MED* also has ‘privation, want’. The only citations in both dictionaries are from the *Katherine* Group and *Cursor Mundi*. It collocates with other items from the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary where it forms a pair with *nede*. It is not used of hell, but its absence is a feature of paradise.

## Words from OFr

<i>poure</i>	42
<i>pouerte</i>	15
<i>meoseise</i>	14
<i>beg</i>	3
<i>hearlot</i>	3
<i>westi</i>	3

### *poure*

I have found forty two instances of *poure* in the AB texts. Both the *OED* and the *MED* have ‘poor’ as a primary sense.

### Material poverty

Fourteen instances seem to refer to material poverty.

There are general references to giving one’s possessions to the poor which seems a clear sense from the context:

þah ich 3eue poure al þ. ich hefde  
 though I gave to the poor all that I had



and the word *poure* translates *pauperum* in the text.

One instance of material poverty echoes a similar citation in the *Trinity Homilies*<sup>149</sup>:

Pe riche reoðeren ant schep - ant bule, hwase mahte -  
brohten to lake, þe poure cwike briddes.  
The rich brought cattle and sheep as offerings;  
whoever could, bulls; the poor. live birds.

*St K B. 21*

The adjective *poure* can be used as a straightforward antonym to *riche*<sup>150</sup>:

þe wrecche poure peoddere mare nurð he madeð . . .  
þen þe riche mercier  
The wretched poor peddlar makes more noise to advertise his soap  
than the rich merchant

*AW (Corpus) 36 16a/25*

#### Inadequate, insufficient

The component of 'inadequate, insufficient' is well represented in AB use of *poure*.

This is clear in the three instances in AW of the phrase *poure pitance*<sup>151</sup>:

<sup>149</sup> a1225(?a1200)*Trin.Hom.*(Trin-C B.14.52) 47: *Hie..brohte þat child mid hire in to þe temple and offredde loc for him..gif hie was riche wimman, a lomb..gif hie was poure, two duue briddes.*

<sup>150</sup> *HM* 4/15

<sup>151</sup> And AW 31a/14, 71a/23. I have found no other examples in a proximity search in the *MED*

A3ein glutunie is his poure pitance þ. he hefde o rode

Against gluttony is his poor pittance which he had on the cross.

AW 134 71a/18

as the *pitance* is a special meal provided by bequest for a feast day, and so should be more luxurious than a day to day meal. *Poure* is applied to food again in this sense in *AW* about the correct way for the anchoresses to distribute alms:

3ef ha mei spearien eani poure schraden. sende ham al dearnliche

ut of hire wanes

If she can spare any poor scraps, let her send them quite secretly out of her house.

AW 212 112a/23

The sense of *poure* here is not straightforward and is discussed further in the section on context.

*Poure* is also be used in this sense as an adverb:

ich hit do se poureliche

I do it so poorly

AW 36 16b/22

### Lacking in

The sense 'lacking in' can be a neutral use as in this citation about Christ:

Þus poure he wes of in

This is how poor he was as to an inn

AW 133 71a/2

although a feature of this passage in context is that it seems to contain a demonstration of material poverty defined through the nature of alms - here of housing the poor.<sup>152</sup>

This following citation also has the sense 'lacking in something':<sup>153</sup>

And ȝet ich haue an heorte unwrest ȝ un

wurði ȝ westi ȝ poure of alle gode þeawes

and yet I have a heart, vile and unworthy, and

destitute and poor of all good virtues

*Wohunge* 610

where here there are negative overtones in terms of the 'quality' of the subject. The context makes it clear that to be *poure* here is negative. In the following citation:

Pu seist þe nis neod na medecine. ah þu art blind iheortet ne ne

sist nawt hu þu art poure 7 naket of halinesse ant gastelich wrecche.

You say you need no medicine but you are blind hearted and do not see

how you are poor and naked of holiness, and a spiritual wretch.

AW 92 48a/10

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<sup>152</sup> See later section discussing this passage.

<sup>153</sup> And AW 54b/3



the use of *poure* has the sense ‘lacking in something’ as in the previous citation, if it is used as a parallel synonym with *naket* so that the sense is of being both ‘lacking in’ and ‘naked of’ holiness. This sense could be carried by *naket* alone through *naket of halinesse*<sup>154</sup> in which case *poure*, as in ‘you are poor’ would of itself be presented as a negative quality.<sup>155</sup> Indeed in the following passage *poure* is used as a stand alone expression of a negative quality.

Pe oper is pusillanimitas, þ. is to poure heorte 7 to earh mid alle

ei heh þing to underneomen in hope of godes help

The second is *Pusillanimitas*, that is, a heart too poor and too cowardly as well to undertake any high thing in hope of God’s help

AW 105 54b/3

Here *pusillanimitas* is the second cub of the bear of heavy sloth, who stands for one of the seven capital sins. There is no doubt in this passage that *poure* is negative in its own right and not as a neutral expression of ‘lack’ where the quality comes from the nature of the thing ‘being lacked’. If so, this could be sense 5a in the *OED* despite the earliest citation being later than the AB texts.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Although *poure 7 naket* could be a phrase

<sup>155</sup> It is interesting in this passage that *gastelich wrecche* is a negative spiritual quality when in the *Lambeth Homilies*, for example, this phrase is used of ‘poor in spirit’ in its positive sense. In spiritual references the nature of *poure* as a quality is complex as *poure* can be used in the sense which the *MED* has as 6(b) ‘humble, meek [often with allusion to the first Beatitude’ (Mat.5.3)]; ~ **in (of) spirit**; ~ **man**; also as noun: **the ~ in gost (spirit)**; The *MED* has the earliest citation under this sense as 1300 (Spec. Guy (Auch)) and this is discussed again later.

<sup>156</sup> *OED* 5. a. ‘Deficient in the proper or desired quality; of little excellence or value; not worth much; of inferior quality, paltry, ‘sorry’; mean, shabby’ first citation *Cursor Mundi* 1300 14869 *þis folk . . . O littel wijt, o pour resun*.

### Literal and metaphoric extension

#### i. Low in the social hierarchy

*Poure* is used as a substantive, *poure* standing for ‘all the poor people’ where their condition is standing for their bodies and the phrase *poure 7 riche* is used to indicate ‘everyone’.<sup>157</sup>

þet poure ba ant riche comen þer biuoren him to þe temple

both poor and rich came there before him to the temple

*St K. B. 18*

Here the antonyms are intended to indicate the two extremes of the social hierarchy, with *poure* as one and *riche* as the other extreme.

### Humility

There are instances which appear to carry the connotations of humility and this extension is a component when *poure* is used of Mary<sup>158</sup>. In the section in *AW* about Christ’s poverty his birth from Mary is part of his poverty on earth:

Her efter þe poure meiden of heouene fostrede him 7 fedde

After this the poor virgin of heaven nursed him and fed him

*AW 133 70b/ 23*

It is possible that it is Mary’s material poverty on earth that is the focus here, but the phrase *þe poure meiden of heouene* seems to contain more than an emphasis on

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<sup>157</sup> *MED* 3b. see also *HM* 19/23 although here there is the component of material poverty as well

<sup>158</sup> Compare *HM* 22/19 where Mary considers herself *lah* see section on *lahe*

her worldly condition. That *poure* applied to Mary does not only involve material poverty is clear in the following instance from *AW* where Christ's earthly experience is put forward as a defence for man against self regard:

Hwa halt him muchel as þe prude deð. hwen he bihalt hu lutel þe  
muchele lauerd made him in wið a poure meidenes breoste.

Who considers himself great, as the proud man does, when he considers  
how small the great Lord made himself within a poor maiden's breast?

*AW* 127 67a/24

It is possible to be materially wealthy and yet be *poure* in heart. Indeed the possession of earthly riches does little good:

bute ha poure beon þerin wið haliness of heorte  
unless they remain poor with it in holiness of heart

*HM* 15/13

This seems to be a use in line with *MED* sense 6 (b), despite the given date of the earliest citation for this sense, which is later than the *AB* texts.<sup>159</sup>

This quality of *poure* in the sense of humble may also be applied to the apostles:

Ich iseh þe apostles, poure ant lah on eorðe  
I saw the Apostles (that were) poor and low on earth

*SW* 100/31

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<sup>159</sup> *MED* 6. (b) 'humble, meek [often with allusion to the first Beatitude (Mat.5.3)]; ~ **in (of) spirit**; ~ **man**; also as noun: **the ~ in gost (spirit)**'; first citation c1330 (?c1300) Spec. Guy (Auch) 164: *Pouh man haue mucche katel..3it he may be pore of mod And low of herte.*



This does not mean in this case that the component of material poverty is missing but their *poure ant lah* quality is bound up with Christ's condition on earth and *poure* is often used of Christ (see below).

### Powerlessness

This is not a sense that has any support from the dictionaries, and my evidence for it is contextual. However the metaphoric use of *poure* of the soul as wooed by Christ seems to contain this component.

Earst as a mon þe woheð. as a king þ. luuede a gentil poure leafdi  
of feorrene lond

First, like a man who woos, like a king who loved a poor lady of good  
family living in a country far off

AW 198 105a/12

The lady is *poure* and yet is also *gentil*, so this does not include the sense in which *poure* is used of those low in the hierarchy of society.<sup>160</sup> The contrast between the lady (the soul) and Christ is developed further<sup>161</sup>:

A lefdi wes mid hire fan. biset al abuten. hire lond al destruet. 7 heo  
al poure inwið an eorðene castel. A mihti kinges luue wes þah biturnd  
uo on hire

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<sup>160</sup> Which I assume is a component in the use of the antonyms *riche* and *poure* to mean 'everyone'.

<sup>161</sup> Shepherd, citing Gaffney, notes that there are many examples of this exemplum of the lady besieged in her castle of which this is the earliest and in *Piers Plowman* is the most famous.

A lady was closely besieged by her enemies, her land completely devastated  
and she all poor inside a castle of earth. A powerful king, though,  
had fallen . . . in love with her

AW 198 105a/20

The focus of contrast between the lady and Christ here is that between *poure* and *mihti*.

There are two instances which draw on a referent from the real world in AW, not the spiritual, in which *poure* may contain an element of 'powerlessness'. The first is of *þe poure widewe hwen ha wule hire hus cleansin* 'the poor widow, when she wants to clean her house' AW 161 85b/9. The collocation *poure widewe* reinforces this, a widow is someone in need of protection, whose position, particularly if she is poor materially, is vulnerable. The last instance is:

þe þridde cunne of fokelere is wurst as ich seide. for he preiseð þe uuele  
7 his uuele dede. as þe þe seide ti þe cniht. þe robbeð his poure men. A  
sire as þu dest wel. for euer me schal þine cheorl peolkin 7 pilien. for he  
is as þe wiðin þe spruteð ut þe betere þ. me hine croppeð ofte.^

The third kind of flatterer is the worst, as I said, for he praises the evil  
person and his evil deed - like him who says to the knight who robs his  
poor, 'Ah, sir, how rightly you act, for the serf needs to be plucked and  
peeled all the time, for he is like the willow, which sprouts out the better  
when it is often cut back.'

AW 46 22b/1

In this passage the word *poure* could include material poverty but it seems to me

in addition that the *poure men* are those over whom the *cniht* has power. They are *his poure men*, they belong to him. This citation is used of *cheorl* in the *OED* to illustrate sense 3. ‘A tenant in pure villeinage; a serf, a bondman. (The position to which most of the OE. ceorlas were reduced after the Norman conquest.)’ and in the *MED* to illustrate 1 (c) ‘bondsman, serf, villein, peasant; servant’. In both these instances there seems to be an element in which *poure* may carry connotations of being low in the hierarchy and hence in a vulnerable, powerless position.

#### Collocation

AW 16a/25	wrecche poure
AW 22b/1	poure men
AW 31a/14	poure pitance
AW 47a/1	poure meiden (hester)
AW 48a/10	poure 7 naket . . 7 gastelich wrecche
AW 54b/3	poure heorte 7 to earh
AW 61a/6	to neodfule 7 to poure
AW 67a/24	poure meidenes breoste
AW 70b/23	poure meiden
AW 71a/18	poure pitance
AW 71a/23	mistrum mele . . . poure pitance
AW 71b/10	godes poure doð hare meoseise
AW 85b/9	poure widewe
AW 105a/12	gentil poure leafdi
AW 108b/12	poure wummon
AW 112a/23	poure schraden
AW 112a/27	poure nehurs



<i>AW</i> 114a/20	poure monne
<i>SW</i> 100/31	poure ant lah
<i>Woh</i> 319	poure . . westi 7 wrecched

#### Antonym

<i>St K B.</i> 18	poure ba ant riche
<i>St K. B.</i> 21	þe riche . . þe poure (offerings)
<i>HM</i> 4/15	of þe riche . . of þe poure
<i>HM</i> 19/23	of poure ba ant riche

(I have not included antonyms that are separated in the text, even though they are antonyms in the context such as *poure* and *mihti* above.)

#### *pouerte*

There are fifteen instances of *pouerte* which is treated as a separate item from *poure* because it appears only in *AW* and *Wohunge*, as does *meoseise* (*Wohunge meseise*), even though *poure* is more widely distributed. There are seven instances in *AW* and eight in *Wohunge*.

#### Material poverty

There is a clear sense of material poverty. In this instance poverty is one of the afflictions that come into the prayers of the anchoresses:

gederið in ower heorte alle seke 7 sarie þ. wa 7 pouerte þolieð

gather in your heart all the sick and sorrowful who suffer misery and poverty

*AW* 19 8a/8

The collocations here make it clear that this is earthly suffering. Humility in confession is likened to a *cointe hearloz* who:

hudeð eauer hire god.^ schaweð forð hire pouerte.  
ever hides her goods and puts on show her poverty.

AW 168 89b/ 5

and here the metaphor draws a threatening portrait of a beggar soliciting alms through conscious deception, so the metaphoric referent of the poverty that is being put on show is clearly that of someone appearing, here falsely, materially poor and in a condition that involves begging for alms.

#### Earthly suffering

God sends poverty as suffering in this world:

Of godd . . . . pouerte. mishapnunge. 7 oþre swucche  
From God . . . . poverty, misfortune and other such

AW 94 48b/10-11

*Poverty* on earth leads to reward in heaven *for wið pouerte 7 wið wa schal mon wele buggen* ‘for with poverty and with woe shall wealth be purchased’ *Wohunge* 363.

The poverty Christ suffered throughout his life is a strong focus in both *AW* and *Wohunge*.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> *Pis wes muche pouerte*: ‘this was great poverty’ (on poverty of his birth) *AW* 133 70b/25 121

*Inoh were pouerte 7 schome wið uten oðre pines* ‘sufficient were poverty and shame without other torments’ *Wohunge* 440

There are uses of *pouerte* however which bring the question of what the components of *poverty* are in context. In a passage in *AW* on Christ suffering poverty throughout his life the culmination, and greatest poverty, comes in the crucifixion:

ah alre meast pouerte com 3et her efter. For steort naket he wes  
despuillet o þe rode

But the greatest poverty of all came after this again: for he was  
stripped stark naked on the cross.

*AW* 133 71a/10

The key word in this passage is *pouerte* and the passage is framed to reflect three of the requirements of alms - to feed, clothe and house the poor. Christ is hungry for food, has only the little space occupied by the foot of the cross and is stripped naked<sup>163</sup>. The condition of Christ at the Crucifixion would not be considered one of 'poverty' in PDE I suggest. This seems to me to be a specific use which is drawing on the charitable acts which relieve the poor - food, clothing and housing. I am not sure that any of the senses given for *pouerte* in the dictionaries are entirely satisfactory in this context. If *MED* sense 2. (a). is assumed, which is of the *poverty* of Christ, then the definition becomes circular. The references in the passage to the lack of food, clothes and lodging, which are the criteria for alms, fulfill the sense of *poverty*, but particularly as applied to Christ at the crucifixion this is puzzling and is an example of a word that appears not to have changed its meaning but which is deceptive in context because the elements in its frame have some differences which may be masked by the apparent familiarity of the word.

The anchoresses are emulating the earthly suffering of Christ in their experience in the anchor house, and there appears to be material deprivation in this but there are

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<sup>163</sup> *Despuillet* is a verb with violent connotations - see section on *naket*



other components to their imitation of the poverty of Christ on earth, such as loss of earthly status in relation to those who were once beneath them in the hierarchy and their dependence on alms.

#### Collocation

AW 8a/8                seke 7 sarie þ. wa 7 pouerte þolieð

AW 48b/10-11                pouerte, mishapnunge

AW 71a/10                pouerte . . for steort naket

AW 115a/14                pouerte 7 unoerneschipe

Wohunge 356-7                mesaise 7 pouerte

Wohunge 363                pouerte . . . wa

#### Antonym

AW 70b/15                3iscceunge . . . pouerte

#### *meoseise*

There are fourteen instances of *meoseise* and among the AB texts it is found only in AW and Wohunge<sup>164</sup> (Wohunge - *meseise*) as is *pouerte*. The MED includes ‘poverty’ as a factor in being in a state of *meoseise* and adds a third strand of a person in this state. As an adjective, the meaning is ‘distressed, in want’.

It is possible to see *meoseise* and *nowcin* almost as synonyms; they are both used of the suffering that is in imitation of Christ’s suffering, and that is used as a test of faith. It is interesting that in the AB texts they are used mutually exclusively, so a text uses one or the other but not both.

<sup>164</sup> So not in the *Katherine* Group, while *nowcin* is found only in the *Katherine* Group.

### Material poverty

The condition that qualifies a person for the support of alms and assistance is named *meoseise*, as when the anchoresses are warned against distributing alms for the poor:

Seinte Marie naueð þe mon oðer þe wummon meoseise 7 namon nule  
don ham nawt.

St Mary - isn't that man (or that woman) in distress and no one will  
do anything for them?

AW 115 60b/8

and those in need of alms in the form of shelter are also described as *meoseise*:

seide ha wes igan o dweole as meoseise þing efter herbearhe  
said she had gone astray, a poor thing looking for shelter

AW 116 60b/28

The condition of *meoseise* is used as a metaphor in the passage<sup>2</sup> about the necessity for confession to be humble (AW 89a/26 ff.). Humility pleads with Christ:

wið þus anewil ropunge halseð efter sum help to þe wrecche meoseise  
With constant beseeching of this sort she implores some help  
for a distressed wretch.

AW 169 89b/13

as a beggar pleads with a rich man.

An important element in the anchoresses' experience is their dependence on others for alms. They share this with the materially poor, and their needs in this respect are described as *meoseise*<sup>165</sup>:

we schawin to gode freond as oþre godes poure doð hare meoseise  
wið milde eadmodnesse  
we show to good friends our distress, as other of God's poor do  
theirs, with mild humility

AW 134 71b/10

It seems uncertain who *oþre godes poure* are here, whether they are the poor in general or whether the meaning is specific to the involuntary poor. See section on *poure*.

### Earthly suffering

#### i. Physical

Some of the instances in *AW* are of physical 'discomfort' or 'distress' including physical illness:

hwa se is ful meoseise. of al beo ha cwite

Whoever is very sick, let her be free of all

AW 28 12a/14

and 'physical discomfort', such as *AW* 28b/6 where it is better for an anchoress to *deie martir in hire meoseise* 'die a martyr in her distress' than that she should ask for better food.

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<sup>165</sup> Also 112b/24



The anchor house itself is intended to be a place that recreates Christ's suffering on earth, so in *AW* the anchor house itself is a place of *meoseise*:

Muchel hofles hit is. cumen in to ancre hus. in to godes prisun willes  
7 waldes to stude of meoseise forte sechen eise þrin 7 meistrie 7 leafdischipe.  
mare þen ha mahte hebben inohreaðe ihaued i i þe worlde.

It is very unreasonable to come into an anchor-house, into God's prison, willingly and wanting to, to a place of discomfort, to seek comfort in it and power and the standing of a lady beyond what she might readily enough have had in the world.

*AW 57 28b/15*

## ii. General suffering

Here *meoseise* could be seen as an emotional rather than a bodily hardship:

mislicunge wið uten.^ ase secnesse. meoseise. scheome. vnhap. 7  
euch licomlich derf þ. te flesch eileð

Displeasure outside, such as sickness, distress, shame, misfortune and each bodily hardship which troubles the flesh.

*AW 93 48a/25*

## Collocation

<i>AW 62 31b/1</i>	pine 7 wone ant . . . meoseises
<i>AW 93 48a/25</i>	secnesse. meoseise. scheome. vnhap . . . derf;
<i>AW 134 71b/10</i>	godes poure . . . hare meoseise;
<i>AW 169 89b/13</i>	wrecche meoseise

*Wohunge* 355

mesaise 7 pouerte

Antonym

*AW* 98 50b/23

to murðe wið meoseise þen to wa wið eise

*AW* 114 59b/12-13

muchele eise efter þe muchele meoseise

In both these antonyms it is the positive and negative form of the same root and the effect is stylistic as well as semantic.

***beggere/begger(e)/beggild***

There are three instances. These items are found only in *AW*. The *OED* suggests that if this word comes from OFr, which is considered more likely than OE *bedecian* as there are no surviving instances between the OE use in Alfred's Pastoral Care and these citations in *AW*, then *AW* contains the first attestations of all these three forms. I shall treat these three forms as one item.

Material poverty

The anchoresses are discouraged from offering alms as they themselves are in the position of beggars and:

Nalde me lahhen a beggere lude to bismere. þe leaðede men to feaste?

Would not a beggar who invited people to a feast be laughed loudly to scorn?

*AW* 211 112a/2

They are therefore reliant on alms. This is a source of shame:

Scheome ich cleopie eauer her. beon itald unwurð. 7 beggin

as an hearlot 3ef neod is hire liueneð

I call shame always being accounted worthless here, and begging  
one's livelihood like a down-and-out if need be

AW 182 96b/16

### Literal and metaphoric extensions

#### i. Low in the social hierarchy

The last is a presentation of the beggar as the lowest in the social hierarchy:

hit is beggilde riht to beore bagge on bac. burgeise to beore purs.^

nawt godes spuse þe is leafdi of heouene.

It is for beggar-women to bear bags on their backs, townswomen to  
bear purses, not God's wife, who is a lady of heaven.

AW 87 45a/21

The *MED* says that *beggilde* was originally a female beggar.<sup>166</sup>

#### Collocation

AW 96b/16                      beggin . . . hearlot

#### Antonym

AW 45a/21                      beggilde . . . burgeise . . . leafdi

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<sup>166</sup> Although the earliest name it gives is Alanum Beghild 1229, a male name.



*hearlot*

There are three instances, all in *AW*. It is included because it collocates with *beggin* and is used of the poor who come to the gate for alms.

#### Material poverty

This instance is part of the warning against the anchoresses, who are beggars themselves, distributing alms:

ne ne tulle 3e to þe 3ete. nane uncuð hearloz. þah þer nere nan oðer uuel

bute hare meadlese nurð

do not encourage any unknown down-and-outs to come to the gate:

though there were no other harm except their immoderate noise

*AW* 211 111b/26

This is the only instance in *AW* in which there is the specific information that the poor might be vagrants, unknown to those who are giving alms.

In the following instance the collocation with *cointe* reinforces the negative context, (elsewhere in *AW* *cointe* is used of the devil.<sup>167</sup>) :

Eadmodnesse is ilich þeose cointe hearloz

Humility is like these cunning down-and-outs

*AW* 168 89a/26

This passage goes on to present a threatening picture of a beggar dissembling in order to receive alms.

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<sup>167</sup> *his cointe couerschiþe his* (the devil's) 'cunning covertness' *AW* 152 80a/13

## Earthly suffering

7 beggin as an hearlot 3ef neod is hire liueneð  
and begging for her living like a down-and-out if there is need

AW 6 96b/16

In this citation in, which *hearlot* is collocated with *beggin*, the context is that of shame and this is used in reference to Christ's life of shame on earth.

### Collocation

AW 89a/26	cointe hearloz
AW 96b/16	beggin as an hearlot
AW 111b/26	uncuð hearloz

### Antonym

None

### *westi*

This is found once in *Hali Meiðhad* and twice in *Wohunge*. It is included because the *MED* gives sense (a) as 'Desolate, deserted' and an additional sense, sense (b) 'destitute' illustrated by the citation below about Christ from *Wohunge* 276/320.<sup>168</sup> It collocates with *poure* and *wrecche*.

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<sup>168</sup> I have put *westi* in the section from OFr but it may be that it could equally well sit in the OE section. The *MED* uses the same citation although derived from two different manuscripts to illustrate two forms, one it derives from OE and one from OFr and gives different senses. For a fuller discussion see the section on individual words.

### Material poverty

In *Wohunge westi* is used once of Christ:

Ihesu mi liues luue riche ar tu as lauerd in heuene 7 in eorðe .

7 tah poure þi bicom for me . westi 7 wrecched

Jesus, my life's love, you are rich as Lord in heaven and earth,

and yet you became for me poor, destitute and wretched

*Wohunge 276/320*

*Westi* is collocated with *poure* and *wrecched* and in context both *westi* and *wrecched* are an alliterating pair amplifying *poure*. The antonym to this group is *riche*.

### Lacking in, deficient

In the second instance the speaker is describing her heart:

And 3et ich haue an heorte unwrest 7 unwurði 7 westi

7 poure of alle gode þeawes

and yet I have a heart, vile and unworthy, and destitute and poor of all good virtues

*Wohunge 284/610*

Here *poure* seems to be used with the sense of 'lacking in, deficient in' and *westi* could extend this, or add 'destitute', or be collocated with *unwrest* and *unwurði*. The collocation seems negative but is a sense found also in *naket* and *poure* for example. It is interesting that although *westi* seems such an ephemeral member of the category in this rare use it could also be carrying this other central sense.



### Peripheral senses

This is the more frequent sense of *westi* as ‘desolate’ or ‘wasteland’ which survives longer:

þet tu nabbe . . . . ne weole nowðer, ant schalt granin godles inwið

westi wahes

so that you do not have . . . . riches either and must pine away in poverty

between bare walls

*HM* 15/18

and here too it is associated with ‘material poverty’ in context. The *OED* gives A. adj. 1. *Desolate, desert*, and also uses this citation from HM as the first instance. The additional senses it gives are all of later use<sup>169</sup>. This sense is peripheral to the AB ‘poverty’ category but is a central sense for *westi*.

An interesting question here is whether this poverty category membership is a metaphoric extension of a literal sense ‘desolate wasteland’ and is used of Christ as a poetic stylistic device. This could also apply to its sense ‘lacking in’ as in ‘barren land’. It is surprising though that this one text would carry both central senses in such an ephemeral occurrence. It is possible that this word has not survived in other instances.

### Collocation

*Wohunge* 276/320

poure . . . westi 7 wrecched

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<sup>169</sup> b. in phrases *desolate place of habitation* 2. *Extravagant in upkeep*. B. *a desert place*.

*Wohunge* 284/610

unwrest 7 unwurði 7 westi 7 poure

Antonym

*Wohunge* 276/320

riche . . . westi

### Summary

For *poure* both the *OED* and the *MED* give the primary sense as ‘material poverty’ and this is reflected in the AB texts. Additional senses are ‘lacking’ and ‘deficient in quality’. I have included this sense in the sense ‘inadequate’ for the AB texts. It collocates within the category and the antonym is *riche*. It is interesting that I have not found it with *weole* as an antonym. It is used substantively and forms part of the phrase *poure and riche* to mean ‘everybody’.

I have identified a context of ‘powerlessness’ although this is not present in the dictionaries. In context *poure* takes on senses of ‘humility’ and is used of Mary and the apostles. The senses of *poure* become complicated in its Christian use, as it comes to express the ‘voluntary poverty’ of Christ and his followers and forms part of the paradox that earthly poverty becomes heavenly riches, earthly weakness becomes heavenly strength.

I have considered *pouerte* as a separate item from *poure* in the AB texts, although they are cognate, because their distribution is different. *Poure* is found in all texts but *pouerte* is found only in *AW* and *Wohunge*. Both the *OED* and the *MED* define *pouerte* as the state of being *poure* involuntarily or voluntarily. It is also one of the earthly sufferings that earn reward in heaven. It collocates within the category.

As with *pouerte*, *meoseise* is found only in *AW* and *Wohunge*. Both the *OED* and the *MED* divide the senses into generalised ‘distress’ and ‘misery’ and then a second sense of the causes of the distress which include ‘poverty’. The distress can be

physical or mental, including illness, and this is reflected in the AB texts. *Meoseise* can be used as a noun of a person in this condition. *Meoseise* collocates with items from the ‘poverty’ category and its antonym is *eise*, probably for stylistic reasons. *Meoseise* is associated in AW with begging for alms. The anchorhouse is described as a place of *meoseise*.

There is no agreement on the etymology of *beggin* and its cognates, which are only found in AW. It has the component of being supported by alms in the dictionaries and this is reflected in AW where it also represents the lowest in the social hierarchy. It does not collocate within the category except with *hearlot*.

*Hearlot* is also restricted to AW and has the context of ‘supported by alms’ but carries the additional sense of ‘vagabond’ with negative overtones. AW is its earliest citation. Within the category it collocates only with *beggin*.

There is confusion about the language derivation of *westi*. The *MED* has two separate entries, one for *westi* and one for *wasti* but both are illustrated with the same citation from *HM*, although from different manuscripts. *Wasti* is given as OFr and *westi* as OE. The *OED* has both forms but considers that they are from OE as *westi*. This item could be here as OFr or OE. It collocates within the category and the antonym is *riche*. The *HM* sense is of ‘wasteland’ but it is extended in *Wohunge* and is applied to Christ as ‘destitute, poor’ and to the speaker as ‘destitute of’, ‘lacking in’.

While many have commented on the number of French loan words in AW, Trotter (2003: 94) considers it more significant that there are loan words which show ME reflexes of French words, but at a date earlier than their attestation in French.

## Discussion

### The Themes

The context of the items in the AB texts appears to cluster into the following areas:



1. Material poverty and alms
  - i. Inadequate with a financial component
2. Of Christ on earth and the imitation of Christ.
3. Earthly suffering: as a test of faith or which leads to heavenly reward and suffering in hell.
4. The contrast between earthly and spiritual things, flesh, sin and the opponents of Christ.
5. Low rank and humility.
6. Powerlessness.
7. Peripheral senses.

### Total Collocations

The first column is the number of collocations. The second column contains the words having that number of total collocations. The third column contains the words having that number of collocations from inside the category, and the fourth column contains the words which have that number of collocations from outside the category.

For example, *poure* is in row 8 for its total of eight collocations, row 7 for its total of seven collocations with words also in the poverty category and row 1 for its remaining one collocation which is with a word from outside the category.

number of  
collocations

	in and outside category	inside the category	outside the category
8.	<i>lah, poure, meoseise</i>	0	0
7.	<i>pouerte, wrecche</i>	<i>poure</i>	0
6.	0	0	0
5.	<i>eðelich, nacod</i>	<i>wrecche</i>	<i>pouerte, lah</i>
4.	<i>wone, westi</i>	<i>meoseise</i>	<i>meoseise</i>

3.	<i>nedelful, hearlot, nowcin wontreaðe</i>	<i>nedelful, nacod, lah</i>	<i>eðelich, wontreaðe</i>
2.	<i>nearones, wac</i>	<i>wac, wone, eðelich, nowcin, pouerte, westi</i>	<i>hearlot, nacod, nearones westi, wone, wrecche</i>
1.	<i>earm, beg, helples godles, mistrum</i>	<i>mistrum, beg, hearlot</i>	<i>earm, godles, helples nowcin, poure</i>
0.	0	<i>earm, nearones, helples godles, wontreaðe</i>	0

The numbers here are very small and too much should not be read into them, but it is interesting that *poure*, which has one of the highest number of collocations both in total and within the category has only one collocation with words outside the category. This discrepancy is not found with *lah* or *meoseise* which are also in the highest group overall. *Poure* is used as a substantive noun<sup>170</sup> which can stand alone and may not be qualified or added to. It is used alone in other senses too but if its use is amplified it is largely by words that exist with it in the AB ‘poverty’ category. This is surprising unless it is that, as a relatively recent adoption, it is reinforced by existing words.<sup>171</sup>

### Collocations with words outside the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary

#### *pouerte* - 5 with:

*seke* ‘the sick’;

*sari* ‘the sorrowful’

*wa* ‘woe’

#### *lah* - 5 with:

*eadmodnesse* ‘humility’

*lutle* ‘little’

*scheome* ‘shame’

<sup>170</sup> For example AW 104a/13 *ich zeue poure al þæt ich hefde* ‘I gave to the poor all that I had’ and in the phrase in *St K. B. 18 þet poure ba ant riche comen þer* ‘both poor and rich came there’ meaning ‘everyone’.

<sup>171</sup> The collocation with a word outside the category is with *earh* ‘cowardly’ in AW 54b/3 *to poure heorte 7 to earh* ‘a heart too poor and too cowardly (to undertake any high thing) and expresses a negative quality in its sense of ‘inadequate’.

*mishapnunge* ‘misfortune’

*þralles* ‘slaves’

*uneorneschiþe* ‘plainness’

*þeowdom* ‘servitude’

*meoseise* - 4 with:

*pine* ‘pain’

*secnesse* ‘sickness’

*scheome* ‘shame’

*unhap* ‘misfortune’

*eðelich* - 3 with:

*ald* ‘old’

*lutel (tale)* ‘of little (account)’

*unwurð* ‘unworthy’

*wontreaðe* - 3 with:

*weane* ‘grief’

*wa* ‘woe’

*derf* ‘suffering’

*hearlot* - 2 with:

with:

*cointe* ‘cunning’

‘bitterness’

*uncuð* ‘unknown’

(as ‘strict’)

*nacod* - 2 with:

*sunne* ‘sin’;

*steort* ‘tail’

*nearones* - 2

*bitternesse*

*hearde* ‘hard’

*westi* - 2 with:

with:

*unwrest* ‘wicked’

*unwurði* ‘unworthy’

*wone* - 2 with:

*pine* ‘pain’;

*weorre* ‘war’

*wrecche* - 2

*beast* ‘animal’

*sunfule* ‘sinful’



1 collocation:

earm - 1 with:

godles - 1 with:

helples - 1

with:

*steorue* ‘pestilential creature’<sup>172</sup>  
counsel’

*ignahene* ‘anxious’

*redles* ‘without

nowcin - 1 with:

poure - 1 with:

*tintreohen* ‘torments’

*earh* ‘cowardly’

0 collocations:

*beg - mistrum - neod/ful - wac*

### **Domains of the collocative words from outside the category**

The domains of the collocative words from outside the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary cluster into the following areas:

#### Individual people

The attributes of individual people cluster around the same referents that the *miserabiles personæ* inhabit. They are *seke* ‘sick’, *ald* ‘old’ and ‘little’ or *lutel tale* ‘of little account’. The association with *pralles* ‘slaves’ is also present. They are suffering as the *sari* ‘the sorrowful, and are *ignahene* ‘anxious’ or *redles* ‘without counsel’. The emotions named are *scheome* ‘shame’; *pine* ‘pain’; *bitternesse* ‘bitterness’.

#### General condition

Their general condition is described as *derf* ‘suffering’ or *wa* ‘woe’. They may be

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<sup>172</sup> (From OE *steorfa* m. ‘pestilence’, ‘carrion’)

suffering through *secnesse* ‘sickness’, or *weane* ‘grief’, *mishapnunge* or *unhap* ‘misfortune’ or be in *þeowdom* ‘servitude’. The state may be associated with an agent such as *tintreohen* ‘torments’<sup>173</sup> or *weorre* ‘war’.<sup>174</sup>

### Negative connotations

The negative connotations divide into those associated with the sinful state of man on earth, so with reference to a religious context, and those which appear to refer to the state of those in ‘material poverty’.

The terms used in the religious context are *unwrest* ‘wicked’; *sunfule* ‘sinful’; *unwurð/i* ‘unworthy’ and, the only collocation for *poure* from outside the AB ‘poverty’ category, *earh* ‘cowardly’.

Of those in ‘material poverty’ the adjectives *cointe* ‘cunning’ and, perhaps more neutral, *uncuð* ‘unknown’ are used.

There is also a collocation with *hearde* ‘hard’ (in the sense ‘strict’).

### Positive connotations

The positive connotations are both in the religious context. They are *eadmodnesse* ‘humility’ and *uneorneschipe* ‘plainness’.

### Specific groups of people

Only *poure* from the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary is used as an adjective of specific groups of people: *monne/men*; *meiden*; *widewe*; *leafdi*; *wummon*; *nehburs*. All the instances are in AW. One group is male, singular and plural<sup>175</sup>; one group is mixed gender, neighbours; four are different groups of women. The content from *HM* leans

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<sup>173</sup> As in SW of the test to faith of life on earth..

<sup>174</sup> In *Lazamon* poverty vocabulary is often used of those that have suffered through war.

<sup>175</sup> Although some of these may be examples of a genderless generality.

heavily towards brides of Christ which influences these figures.

## 2. Of animals

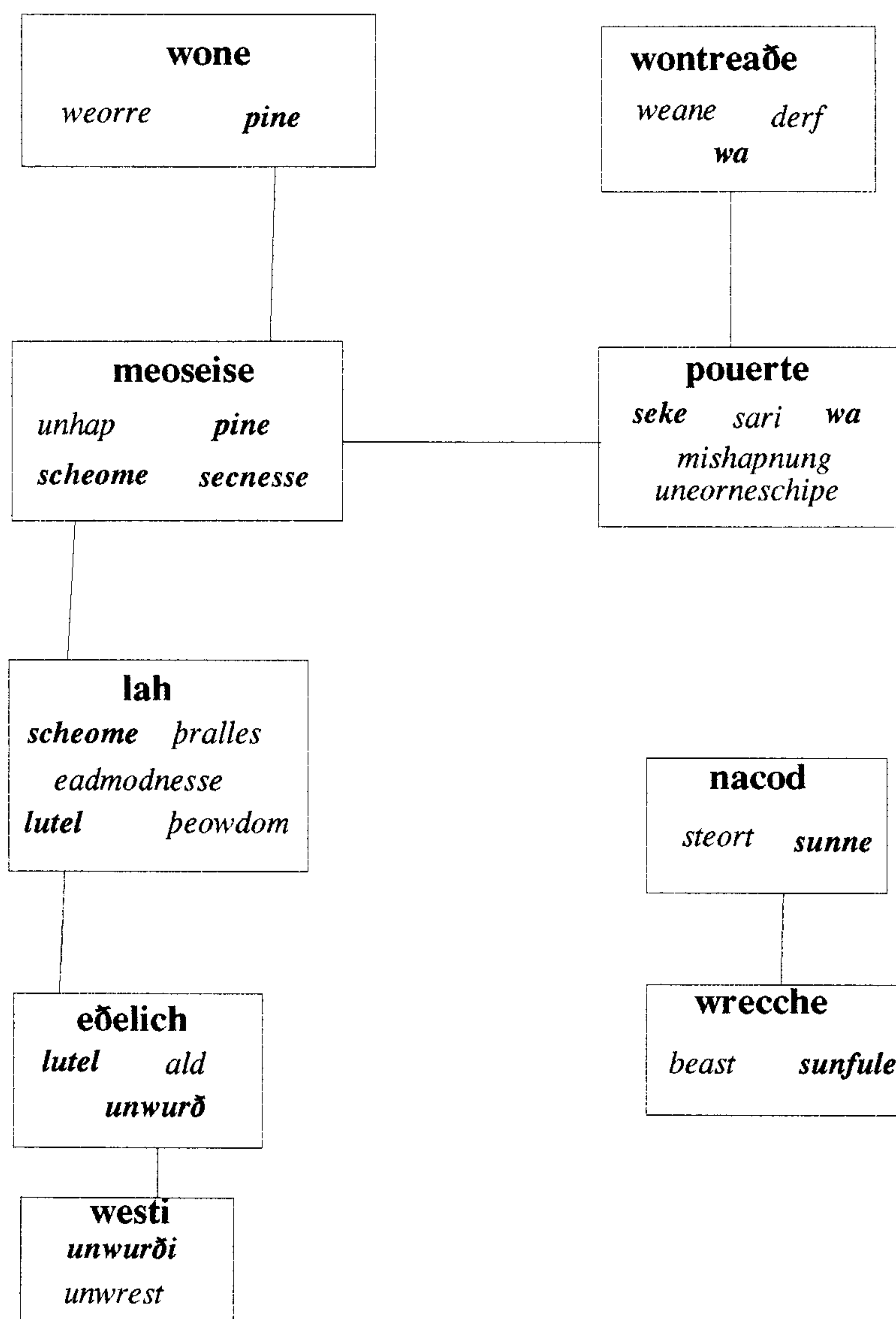
Animals do not figure widely. In the phrase *steort naket*, *steort* has the sense ‘tail’.

Otherwise the references are in a religious context as in *AW* 90b/9 man is likened to a *wrecche beast* ‘animal’ when ensnared by the devil and in *St M* B. 28/14 the demon is addressed by the saint as *earme steorue* ‘pestilential creature’.

### **Model of shared collocations with words outside the AB poverty vocabulary**

This map shows the collocations which are made with words outside the ‘poverty’ category. Words from the ‘poverty’ vocabulary that do not share any collocative words with other items from within the vocabulary are omitted, so *poure* which collocates uniquely with *earh* outside the category and is alone in that collocation is not included. The words from the ‘poverty’ vocabulary are in plain type and the collocative words are in smaller italic. Bold italic denotes words from outside the category that collocate with more than one ‘poverty’ word and a line links their square with their other collocative partner. Medium italic denotes words that collocate only with the word naming the square they inhabit.





*Nacod* and *wrecche* share *sunne/sunfule* ‘sin/sinful’ with each other but do not link into the web made by the links between the rest of the words.

*Nearones* and *hearlot* have two collocative words each, but neither share these with any of the other poverty words.

*Meoseise* appears to be a central item in collocations both inside and outside the poverty category but a factor in this may be its appearance in AW which is long.

Words from outside the category that share items from within it are:

*pine* sharing *wone* and *meoseise*

*wa* sharing *wontreaðe* and *pouerte*

*seke/secnesse* sharing *pouerte* and *meoseise*

*scheome* sharing *meoseise* and *lah*

*lutel* sharing *lah* and *eðelich*

*unwurð/i* sharing *eðelich* and *westi*

And, linked only to each other, *sunne/ful* sharing *nacod* and *wrecche*

### **Collocations between words within the ‘poverty’ vocabulary**

Collocations from within the AB ‘poverty’ vocabulary, in descending order of frequency, are:

7 collocations: *poure*

5 collocations: *wrecche*

4 collocations: *meoseise*

3 collocations: *neod/fule* - *nacod* - *lah*

2 collocations: *wac* - *wone* - *eðelich* - *nowcin* - *pouerte* - *westi*

1 collocation: *mistrum* - *beg* - *hearlot*

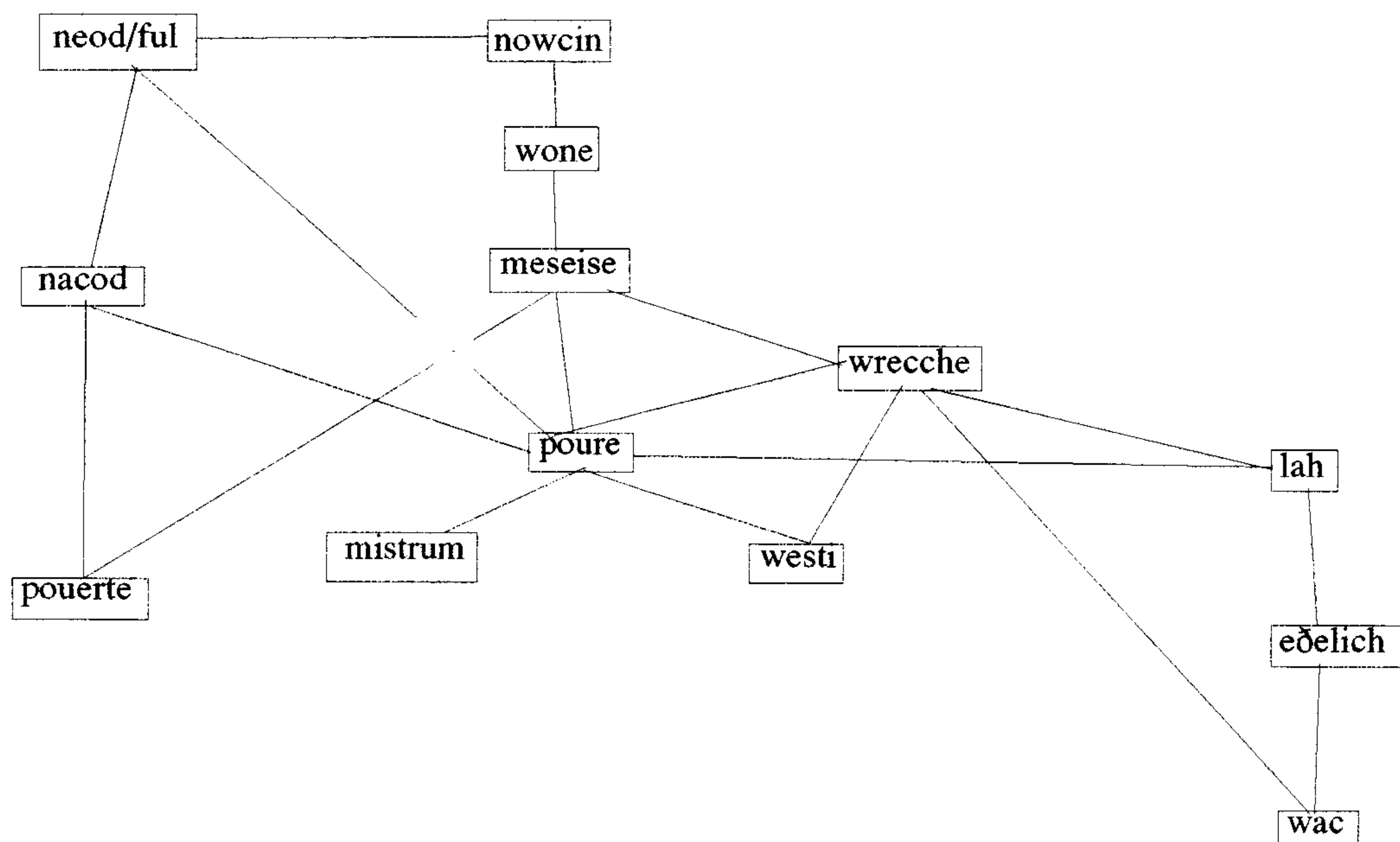
0 collocations *earm* - *nearones* - *helples* - *godles* - *wontreaðe*

As the numbers are so small it is important not to read too much into the totals - for example *westi* appears with two collocations but both collocations are from the same phrase; *mistrum* has one collocation but this is the only recorded instance of its use.

However, it is interesting that *poure*, *wrecche* and *meoseise* are still high when collocations are restricted to those from within the category, whereas *lah* loses five of its eight collocations. *Earm*, *nearones*, *helples*, *godles* and *wontreaðe* collocate only outside the category.

## Model of collocations between words within the AB poverty vocabulary

The lines link the words which collocate.



*Beg* and *hearlot* collocate only with each other and so are not included in the chart.

*Earm*, *helples*, *godles*, *nearones* and *wontreaðe* have no collocations with words within the poverty vocabulary, although they collocate with words from outside the vocabulary.

There are collocations among items from all three source languages. The shape of the web shows the dimensions of literal poverty - *neod/ful*, *nacod* linked to *pouerte*, and the other expressions for the condition of suffering - and the dimension of the emotional or spiritual condition which expresses 'humility' - *lah*, *eðelich* and *wac* - linked through *poure* and *wrecche*.

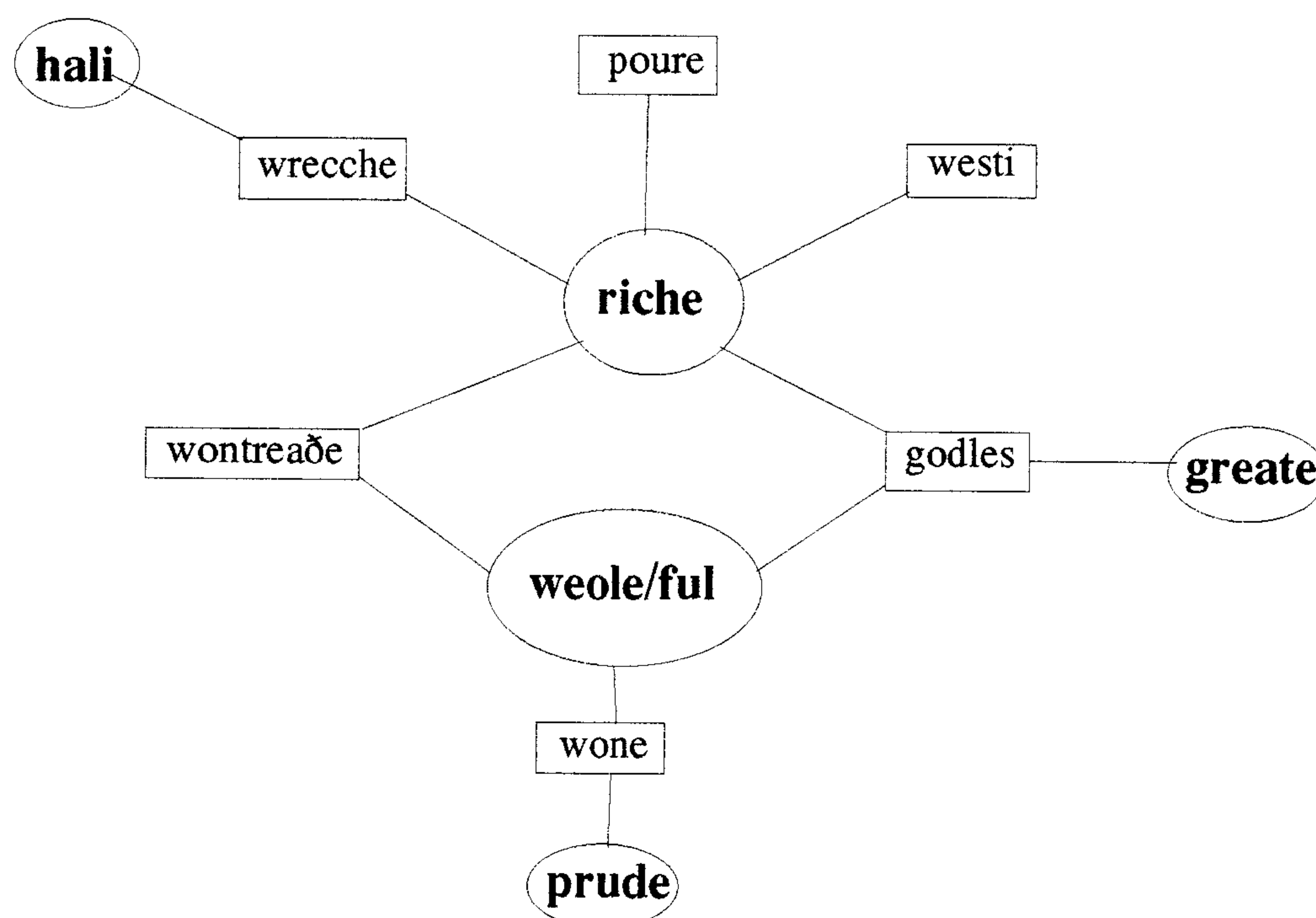
The position of *pouerte* is surprising. It is often used in connection with Christ, particularly often in *Wohunge*. It might be expected then that it lie on the other side of the map with the dimension that links to humility. In the AB texts it is used in *AW* and



*Wohunge*. In *AW* it is used of the dissembling beggar (*AW* 89b/5) where the referent is ‘materially poor’ and the passage uses collocations from ‘material poverty’, although the context is spiritual as the beggar’s behaviour is a metaphor for confession. In *Wohunge* it is used in connection with Christ, and here it might have been expected to have clearer links with the dimension of lowness and humility. However, in *Wohunge* it is frequently used in a passage following a section which brings to mind the passage in *AW* of Christ’s poverty growing ever greater through his life and culminating in the poverty on the cross (*AW* 71a/10). In this *pouerte* stands alone, as a word whose credentials have been established in the previous passage, with no collocations or qualifying words. It is almost like a shorthand, or familiar phrase, whose components need no amplification in context and so has little collocation. *Meoseise*, *poure* and *wrecche* are central items in this collocative web.

### Antonym

The rectangles contain the poverty vocabulary, and the circles contain the antonyms.



There are additional antonyms

*eðelich* is contrasted with *deorewurðe* in a financial context

*wac* is contrasted with *gode*, and with *feore* in a financial context

*meoseise* is contrasted with *eise*, perhaps with stylistic influence

*lah* only contrasts with *heh*

*pouerte* contrasts with *ȝiscceunge* ‘covetousness’

*begilde* is at the bottom of a hierarchy which sets *burgeise* above and then *leafdi* above both

These do not link to other antonyms so were not included in the map.

*Riche* and *weole/ful* are the most common antonyms and both carry the sense of material wealth, although *riche* may still carry the sense ‘power’ at this period. Only *wontreaðe* and *godles* contrast with both these antonyms, so they could be carrying a central sense. *Riche* contrasts with *poure*, *westi* and *wrecche* and *weole/ful* contrasts with *wone* all of which have been identified as carrying the core sense of material poverty.

That *wrecche* contrasts with *hali* is interesting here. This may point to a possible factor in its replacement by *poure* during this period. It carries negative senses such as of ‘sin’ and ‘hell’ so it could have become too loaded a term for the involuntary, and positively viewed, poverty that became a spiritual issue from the twelfth century on.

In the following tables new senses arise with each additional set of words that are added to the category, and these new senses have remained in the senses list even though they may be empty in subsequent columns.

## Grouping the words in subcategories (arranged by source language)

<u>sense</u>	<u>TOE</u>	<u>OE</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>OFr</u>
material poverty	<i>nacod, nedelful</i>	<i>godles, helples</i> <i>wone, wrecche</i>	<i>nowcin,</i> <i>wontreaðe</i>	<i>beg, hearlot</i> <i>meoseise,</i> <i>pouerte</i> <i>poure, westi</i>
necessity	<i>nede, þearf</i>	0	0	0
literal/metaphoric	<i>nacod, nearones</i>	<i>eðelich, wac</i>	<i>lah</i>	0
lacking in	<i>nedelful, nacod</i>	<i>wone</i>	0	<i>poure, westi</i>
general need	<i>nede</i>	0	0	0
earthly	<i>earm</i>	<i>wone, wrecche</i>	<i>lah, wontreaðe</i>	0
sin/hell	<i>earm</i>	<i>wrecche</i>	<i>wontreaðe</i>	0
opponents of Christ	<i>earm</i>	<i>wrecche</i>	0	0
eager, desirous	<i>nede</i>	0	0	0
inadequate/insuffic.	0	<i>mistrum, wac</i> <i>eðelich</i>	0	<i>poure</i>
humble	0	<i>eðleich, wac</i>	<i>lah</i>	<i>poure</i>
of the flesh	0	<i>wac, wrecche</i>	<i>lah</i>	0
low value	0	<i>eðelich</i>	0	0
low rank	0	<i>eðelich</i>	<i>lah</i>	<i>beg, poure</i>
sensual	0	<i>eðelich</i>	0	0
easy	0	<i>eðelich</i>	0	0
without good	0	<i>godles</i>	0	0
unable to help self	0	<i>helples</i>	0	0
suffering as test	0	0	<i>nowcin,</i> <i>wontreaðe</i>	<i>meoseise,</i>
<i>pouerte</i>				
physical illness	0	0	0	<i>meoseise</i>
dissembling beggar	0	0	0	<i>hearlot</i>



bare/desolate	0	0	0	<i>westi</i>
powerless	0	0	0	<i>poure</i>

## TOE

*wædle* was a central item in the TOE category and does not appear at all. The other central item was *þearf* which in the AB texts is restricted to the sense ‘necessity’. A central item here is *nede* which did not play a large part in the TOE category, while here it is in the head sense as *nedfule*. It continues its OE sense of ‘need’ and ‘necessity’ and adds ‘lacking in’. ‘Eager, desirous’ appears to be a rare eME survival of OE *neod* ‘desire, longing; zeal, earnestness’ (Clark Hall). *Nacod* and *nearones* continue their OE senses but *nacod* adds the sense ‘lacking in’. *Earm* continues its OE senses.

## OE

*Wrecche* is a central word in the eME category of poverty although in the AB texts its position is less central, often being supplanted by *poure*. Some of the additional senses that appear with these words in the AB texts were present with words in the *TOE* category, for example *earm* was often used of the earthly life, so ‘earthly as opposed to spiritual’ and ‘of the flesh’ are a continuation of senses present in OE, but some of these senses, such as ‘humble’ and ‘morally weak’, appear new for words used of ‘poverty’.

## ON

Here the sense ‘humble’ is reinforced by *lahe* as is the sense of being ‘low in the hierarchy’. It is interesting that the connection with sin and, here, hell which is present from the words in the *TOE* category and in the OE category, is also reinforced from ON. The additional sense that words from ON brings is the use of the experience of

‘earthly suffering’ as either a test of faith or as something that earns a reward in heaven.

## OFr

It is striking how many of the relatively small group from OFr appear in the head sense ‘material poverty’. This is the highest total in all four groups. It is also striking that while the ON words appear in 7 of the senses that are in the OE categories, the OFr appear in only five of them. They do not appear in the negative senses connected to the flesh, or sin. It is possible that these words came with less polysemy<sup>176</sup> and that this was part of the reason for the rapid adoption and spread of *poure* and its cognates

### Whole category arranged by word totals

<u>sense</u>	<u>TOE</u>	<u>OE</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>OFr</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
material poverty	2	4	2	6	14
literal/metaphoric	2	2	1	0	5
lacking in	2	1	0	2	5
earthly	1	2	2	0	5
humility	0	2	1	1	4
low rank/in hierarchy	0	1	1	2	4
suffering as a test/reward	0	0	2	2	4
inadequate, insufficient	0	3	0	1	4
of sin/hell	1	1	1	0	3
of the flesh	0	2	1	0	3
of opponents of Christ	1	1	0	0	2
necessity	2	0	0	0	2
earthly, not spiritual	0	1	1	0	2
general need	1	0	0	0	1

<sup>176</sup> Koivisto-Alanko notes that it is rare for a word to be borrowed with several different meanings (1998).

eager/desirous	1	0	0	0	1
insignificant/low value	0	1	0	0	1
sensual pleasure	0	1	0	0	1
easy	0	1	0	0	1
without good	0	1	0	0	1
unable to assist ones self	0	1	0	0	1
physical illness	0	0	0	1	1
bare, desolate	0	0	0	1	1
powerlessness	0	0	0	1	1
dissembling poverty	0	0	0	1	1

I shall not include the literal and metaphoric senses at this stage. I shall look at only the subcategories that contain more than one word. Of these ‘material poverty’ and the concept ‘lacking in’ appear to be the prototypical senses.

Words derived from OE<sup>177</sup> appear in all the fourteen subcategories apart from ‘suffering as a test or reward’ although the sense difference between this and ‘earthly suffering’ is slight and I will amalgamate these subcategories.

Words derived from ON do appear in the central sense ‘material poverty’ but they do not appear in the sense ‘lacking in’ nor in ‘inadequate, insufficient’ or ‘morally lacking’. They do not appear in ‘necessity’ nor ‘of the opponents of Christ’ although they are used in negative senses such as ‘of sin and hell’ and ‘of the flesh’. There are five subcategories in which they do not appear.

Words derived from OFr are equal in number to the OE derived words in the central sense ‘material poverty’ and also appear in the important concept ‘lacking in’. However there are nine subcategories in which they do not appear, and it is striking that they are absent in the most negative subcategories - they are not represented in ‘of

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<sup>177</sup> This means those words which are from the *TOE* ‘poverty’ category and the OE derived words which are in my AB text ‘poverty category’.



sin and hell', 'of the flesh', 'of the opponents of Christ', 'earthly not spiritual' or 'morally lacking'.

### **Model of senses within the AB 'poverty' category**

All the words that appear in the sense 'material poverty' are included with their additional senses.

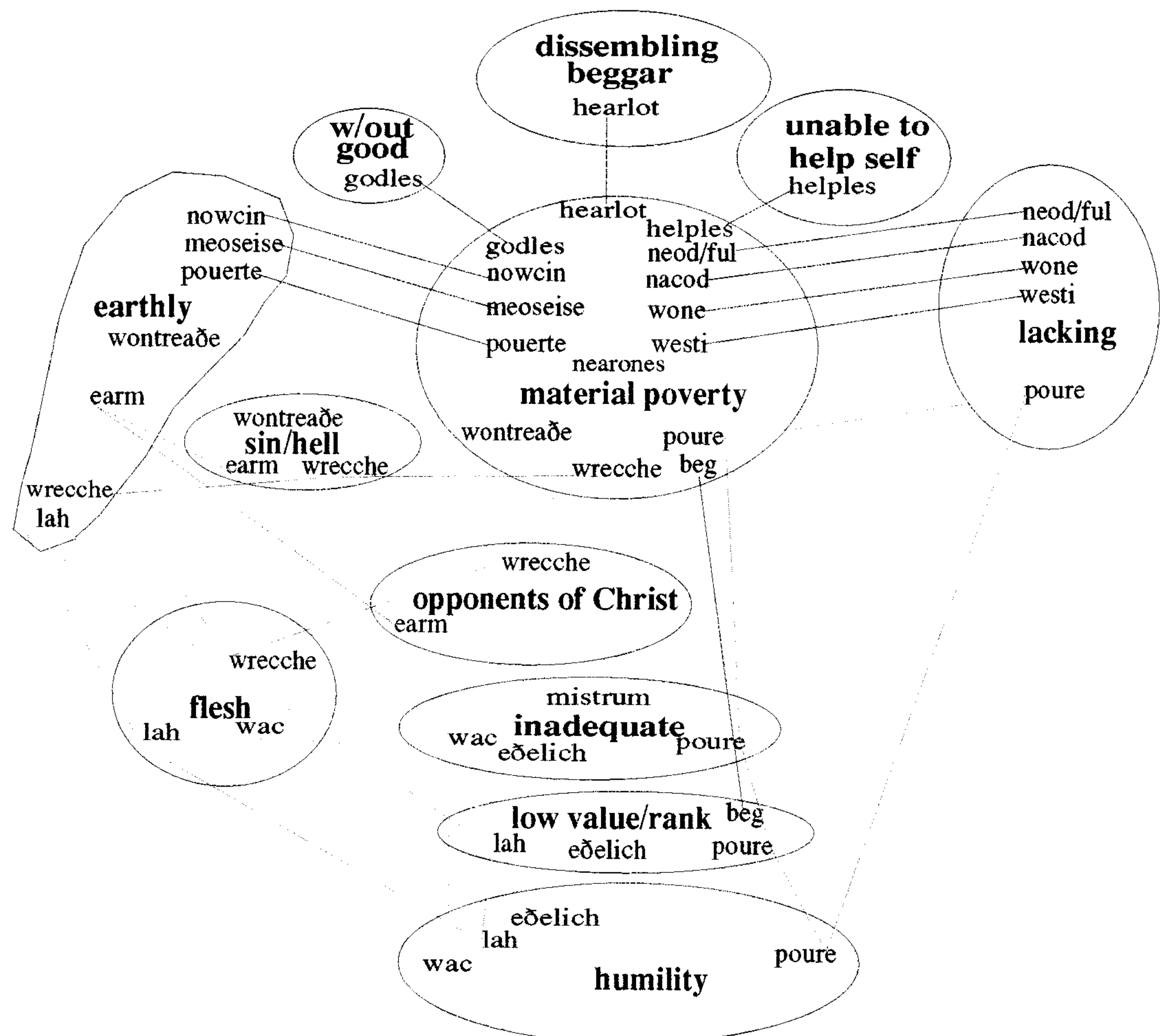
The group labelled 'earthly' is an amalgamation of:

- i. 'earthly suffering' - *earm* and *wontreaðe*, but *wone* is not included as it has in context the sense of suffering with a component of 'poverty' and so these instances are represented by its instances of 'material poverty'.
- ii. 'earthly as opposed to spiritual' - *wrecche* and *lah*.
- iii. earthly suffering with the context of 'as a test of faith or as rewarded in heaven' - *nowcin*, *wontreaðe*, *meoseise* and *pouerte*.
- iv. the sense 'physical illness' for *meoseise*.

The group labelled 'low value/rank' is an amalgamation of 'low value' which contains only *eðelich* and 'low rank' which contains *eðelich*, *lah*, *beg* and *poure*.

'Literal/metaphoric' is not included. These are words which have a physical dimension - *nacod*, *nearones*, *eðelich*, *wac* and *lah*. This is the source of *nearones* as 'material poverty'. Also omitted here are 'need' - *nede* and *þearf* - as a grammatical construct.

## Map of the contextual senses



There is no specific group for ‘voluntary poverty’ and yet it is clear from the model where this dimension lies, towards the right of the model, with the subcategories ‘humility’ and ‘low value’. *Poure* connects these groups, such as ‘humility’, that would otherwise have no direct link to ‘material poverty’ and would be present in the category through family resemblance. It is striking in this model that *poure* occupies a

diametrically opposing area to *wrecche*, which was a central item in the category before the spread of *poure*.<sup>178</sup>

### Direct connections to ‘material poverty’

I have identified ‘material poverty’ as a prototypical sense. The words that express this are included in the model with their additional senses which may not be inside the category. This means that the senses of ‘dissembling beggar’ (*hearlot*); ‘without good’ (*godles*); and ‘unable to help ones self’ (*helples*) appear around the central sense although they all contain only one word. I have not included the additional senses of all the words from the category.<sup>179</sup>

‘Material poverty’ has direct links to all the other groups.

There are five words that link ‘material poverty’ and ‘lacking’. Three are OE and two OFr<sup>180</sup> but of these only *poure* carries more than these two senses.<sup>181</sup> ‘Lacking’ is another prototypical sense in the ‘poverty’ category. The quality of ‘poverty’ applies to many things. It applies to the lack of material conditions needed for life as expressed through the clothing, feeding and housing of the poor through alms. As a voluntary condition it applies to the lack of earthly things that hamper the soul, in part material goods but also power and status. Constable (1996) comments that ‘The modern definition of poverty emerged in the 12th century when *paupertas* came to mean a lack of material resources rather than of power or social position, and when moral and legal thinkers began to address themselves to the social problem of indigency.’<sup>182</sup>

There appears to be one sense of *poure* which carries a negative component.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Although here *poure* has separated from its cognate *pouerte*.

<sup>179</sup> These appear in the section on ‘peripheral senses’.

<sup>180</sup> Unless the source of *westi* is considered to be OE. See individual word section.

<sup>181</sup> I am not including the physical referent of *nacod* here, it is present metaphorically where *nacod* stands for ‘material poverty’.

<sup>182</sup> Constable (1996 p. 318) but this is a widely held view, often taking Bosl’s work on the meaning of *paupertas* in the Carolingian period as a starting point.

<sup>183</sup> In context ‘low value/rank’ may not carry this negativity as it is part of the



This is 'inadequate' which it shares with *eðelich*, *wac* and *mistrum*. This component grows and is still present in PDE.

There are five connections between 'material poverty' and the 'earthly' group, which includes earthly suffering and the earthly life. *Nowcin*, *meoseise* and *pouerte* have only these two senses, but *wontreaðe* and *wrecche* also carry senses of sin and hell, and *wrecche* of the opponents of Christ, which it shares with *earm*, and of the negative feelings towards the flesh, which it shares with *lah* and *wac*.

Only *earm*, *eðelich*, *lah*, *mistrum* and *wac* do not appear in 'material poverty'. Their connections are through family resemblances. *Earm* has moved out of the TOE category 'material poverty' and *mistrum* has only this recorded instance, but the other three seem to me to be playing a part in the dual nature of man, partly they express the earthly, as opposed to the spiritual, life but they also express the nature of the self regard that constitutes 'humility'.

A comparison of *wrecche* and *poure*, through the nature of their senses, provides an indication of the different ground they inhabit. Both appear in five groups. Both are present in 'material poverty' but do not overlap anywhere else.<sup>184</sup> *Poure* has a negative sense in 'inadequate' and a more neutral sense in 'lacking'. Its other senses are positive in context as they are concerned with the self regard which forms the humility of the holy; 'low value/rank' and its associated sense 'humility'. *Wrecche* is in the 'earthly' group but then extends into the negative sense 'of the flesh' which in context involves hatred and distaste and *wrecche* is used in very negative connections with 'sin/hell' and of the 'opponents of Christ'.<sup>185</sup> It does not seem hard to see why *poure* had advantages over *wrecche* as an expression for 'poverty' when the association with voluntary poverty and the poverty of Christ on earth became a central preoccupation.

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paradox of the humble status on earth which gives great status in heaven.

<sup>184</sup> Unless *pouerte* is included in which case they both appear in 'earthly'.

<sup>185</sup> The interesting question is how *wrecche* with its pre-existing negative connotations came to be a central item in the 'poverty' category in early Middle English.

*Nearones* is isolated in this model. Although it appears as central in the construction of the passages demonstrating Christ's poverty throughout his life, in company with his nakedness and his hunger, its use does not move into the substantive that 'the naked' and 'the hungry' do. Its sense is clear in context but 'the narrowly housed' does not function as one of the 'metaphors we live by'. This is curious because it is used, in the passage in *AW* (see appendix), specifically as part of the criteria for the definition of *pouerte* as suffered by Christ throughout his life, with its culmination on the cross. This may be an example of the addition made to the linguistic establishment of sense (derived from antonym, synonym and dictionary definition), by the establishment of sense through encyclopedic knowledge (derived from context in the text and knowledge of background). *Nearones* is an expression of a concrete referent in the way that *nacod*, *lah* and *wac* are, for example. Their move from the concrete to the abstract through metonymy appears in the dictionaries<sup>186</sup> and here can be seen happening with the use made of *nearones* for a specific purpose, to establish both a concrete and a spiritual sense of 'poverty' for Christ in the passage in *AW*<sup>187</sup>. However metonymy does not happen with *nearones* and it is tempting to think that our current perception of its sense in ME texts is coloured by that. It may be one of those words whose resonance for the contemporary reader is richer than it is for us. This connotation of poverty does not survive into PDE.

In the AB texts *pearf* has completed its move to a grammatical function and it plays no semantic role outside that. *Nede* has separated into the same function as *pearf* but with another branch that, particularly in the form *nedeful*, moves into a greater role in the 'poverty' category than it played in OE.

Both *wædle* and *pearfa* have associated verbs, but verbs are not a strong feature of the members of the AB poverty category. The verbs that are present express 'lacking in' or 'soliciting alms'. 'Poor' has an associated verb but in the *OED* as 'to become

<sup>186</sup> For a discussion of the process with reference to *wit* see 'Mechanisms of semantic change' by Koivisto-Alanko (1998).

<sup>187</sup> See appendix



poor' it has only one recorded use in Digby MS 86 c.1275; and as 'to make poor' it has four citations from Wyclif in c. 1380 to 1500. 'To impoverish' has its earliest citation in sense 1 'To make poor, to reduce to poverty' as 1440 J. Shirley *Dethe K. James*. This transitive sense appears less prevalent than the sense expressed by the other parts of speech. There is a verb with the sense 'to beg' in the category, and there were several in OE<sup>188</sup>, and soliciting alms was part of the concept of poverty where making someone poor may not have been. The verb 'to need' is generally used in the AB texts as a verb of necessity although it can be used for a general 'to be in need of'.

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<sup>188</sup> *Bedecian, giernan and wædlian*



## 8. Individual Words

### Introduction

This section is concerned with the individual items that have been collected through the texts and which form an overall category of 'poverty' from the OE into the eME period in the texts that have been studied. The items are grouped under a head word and all forms of the head word are considered together, including all variant grammatical forms. The exception to this is *pouere* and *pouerte* which are considered separately because in the AB texts these words do not appear in all the texts.

The items are traced through the *TOE* categories, unless their origin is other than OE, and any categories and sub categories they appear in are detailed, along with any other items from this section which appear in the same categories. Where an item appears in only a few *TOE* categories this is discussed in the body of the text, but this information may be given in list form if there are so many categories that a list form makes the information easier to access. One difficulty is the existence of very specific words, such as the various forms of *ælmes*- where the prefix denotes a range of things that are used in connection with alms, such as a light, land or a penny and so on. Where this gives rise to a large number of items, which do not materially affect the senses that accumulate around an item through its uses in context, this is referred to but specifics are not discussed to avoid overload of detail.

The additional categories that an item appears in give an idea of the polysemy of the item, which is important in finding some of the linguistic and conceptual elements of the frame that the item inhabits. The sharing of a category, or a subcategory, by an item and other items from the *TOE* and/or eME 'poverty' categories seems to be an example of associated concepts which hover around the category even though they may be expressed through different items in different periods. Usually these are related concepts, such as 'want, lack' or 'abject' or 'Of little worth/importance' but the

category they share in the *TOE* may sometimes point to surprising dimensions which could be seen as ephemeral or reflect an extreme or unusual use, except that they are reinforced by the appearance of more than one word, or have been a shared category for some of the 'poverty' words over time; for example the category **11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity** which is shared by some of the words from the *TOE* 'poverty' category, and in which also appear some words that are not in the *TOE* 'poverty' category but which are later in the eME 'poverty' category, so OE items which appear in these additional categories may not appear in the *TOE* category, but may move closer to 'poverty' as time passes.

The dictionary information is primarily from the *OED* and *MED* with additions from glossaries and notes that are relevant to individual texts. Any information about an item which is specific to a particular text or group of texts may be found in the discussion on that text.

## Words from the *TOE* poverty category

### *ælmes*

In **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** *ælmesmann* appears once in **..Beggar, person supported by alms** with *loddere* and *tætteca*; *ælmeslic* is the only word in **..Depending on alms**. There is no entry for *ælmes-* in the subsequent category, which is **15.01.06.01 Begging**, so in OE this word seems to have a specific sense of a person who receives alms rather than a general beggar or one who is helped out in an informal way by neighbours for example.<sup>189</sup>

In view of the observation made elsewhere that the focus in many of the texts is not those poor who receive alms but rather those who donate alms, it is interesting to note this reflected in the comparison with the *TOE* category **16.02.04.09 Almsgiving, charitableness** in which the prefix *ælmes-* is an element in seventeen out of twenty

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<sup>189</sup> See 'naked poor' on the discussion below.



four items<sup>190</sup> in contrast to its two entries in the category **Poverty, indigence** where the poor are the focus. The remaining entries for *ælmes-* are concerned with specific aspect such as, among others, lights bought to a church by a layman (**03.01.12.02**), First Fruits (**04.02.04.04.02**) and land devoted to alms (**16.02.05.01**).

This is supported by the dictionaries as both the *OED* and the *MED* have considerably more entries and citations for *alms* as an act of charity than they have for those who are supported by alms. The *OED* for *almsman* has '1. One supported by alms, or by funds bequeathed for the support of the poor' where the earliest citation is c.1000 *Sax. Leechd.* line 400 and the next from *Lazamon*.<sup>191</sup> The *MED* for *almesman* has '(a) An almsman, one who receives or lives on alms; a beadsman, an almsman endowed to pray for the soul of his benefactor; a poor man, a beggar; also *fig.*; (b) an official distributor of alms, an almoner.' although the earliest citation for b. is not until 1431.<sup>192</sup> In the *MED* entry for *almes* however, while the entries focus on the charitable act, sense 6a. is '*almes(se asking, asking for alms begging*' with the earliest citation from c. 1450<sup>193</sup> so the word later does have the sense of a 'general beggar' as opposed to its more specialist appearance in the *TOE* and *eME*.

### *earm*

(homonym *earm* with the meaning of the physical 'arm' is not included)

In OE *earm* appears in many categories apart from that of **Poverty and indigence**, and carries a range of senses. It appears, for example, in categories concerning

<sup>190</sup> *almesgifu*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmeshand*, *ælmeslac*<sup>o</sup>, *almessylen*, *ælmesdæd*, *ælmesse*, *ælmesweorc*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmesbæp*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmesgedāl*, *ælmesfeoh*, *ælmespenig*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmesdonde*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmesgifa*<sup>o</sup>, *ælmesful*, *ælmesgeorn*, *ælmeslic*, *ælmeslice*. Seven of these are flagged <sup>o</sup> indicating a single instance.

<sup>191</sup> C9811 *Nu wenden forð þa cnihtes . . . on ælmes-monnes claðes*

<sup>192</sup> 1431 *Grocer Lond. (Kingdon) 197/2: The names of our Almusmen þat haven..every woke xij d. a man.*

<sup>193</sup> c. 1450 *Alph. Tales (Add. 25719) 406/4: A pure man axkid almos of a shipman..And the shipman bad him lefe his almos-axking.*



'poverty', 'general misery' and 'affliction', and 'want or lack'<sup>194</sup> and in categories of 'pity' and 'compassion'<sup>195</sup>. The complexity of its polysemy is illustrated in the TOE category **07.07 Humility** where *earm* can mean 'poor in spirit', 'humble and poor, mean, sorry'.<sup>196</sup> *Earmð* does not appear in the TOE<sup>197</sup>. *Iermþ* in the TOE appears in the head categories of **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** and in: **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction; 12.08.06 Moral evil, depravity**.

This connection with evil has a parallel in the connotations of *wrecche* in the eME period when it is used of damned souls in hell.

In the *MED* it appears as *ermthe* (a) 'Poverty'; (b) 'misery, wretchedness, grief, suffering'; as *arm/erm* (a) 'Poor, poverty-stricken'; as noun: 'needy person'; *edi* and *~*, 'rich and poor'; (b) 'miserable, unfortunate'; 'unhappy, sad'; as noun: 'miserable one, unhappy man'; (c) *~ lif*, 'wretched life', i.e. 'life on earth'; *~ whil*, 'unhappy time, weary hour'.

In the *OED* it appears as *armth(e)* 'Poverty, wretchedness, misery' with a citation from HM 18/26

as *arm* I. 'Poor, needy'. 2. 'Miserable, wretched'.

There are two uses of *earm* in Hali Meiðhad in the compound *earm-hwile* both of which refer to the troubles of bringing up a child. The suffix *hwile* was not attached to *earm* to form this meaning in OE. In category **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction** subcategory **.Time of Adversity** there are no *earm* prefixes among 15 words; in

<sup>194</sup> **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction** as an element or a word in subcategories: **.Wretched man; .Afflicted, full of trouble; ..Gloomy, miserable; and .Calamitous**

**10.02 Want, lack** in subcategory **.Destitute of, without** (with *dællēas*)

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** in subcategory **.Poor, needy, indigent**

<sup>195</sup> **08.01.02.06.01 Pity** contains 14 items of which 5 contain *earm* as a component including the subcategory **.To cause pity (in a person): earmian**. Not all are in the sense of exciting pity, for example **.Pitiful, tender-hearted: earmheort**

<sup>196</sup> **07.07 Humility** **..Poor in spirit, humble: earmful; ..Poor, mean, sorry: earmlic; ..Meanly, abjectly: earmlice**.

<sup>197</sup> Although *earmðu* 'misery, poverty' is cited in Clark Hall as *armthe*, once, from King Alfred's translation of Boethius.

subcategory **..Time of weariness:** *langunghwīl<sup>op</sup>* is the only word, and in subcategory **..Time of distress (present life):** *wræchwīl* is the only word. However in the same category **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction:** *earm* appears as an element or a word in **.Wretched man; .Afflicted, full of trouble; ..Gloomy, miserable; and .Calamitous,** so this is not a completely new field for *earm*.

### *haueleste*

As *hafenlēas* and *hafenlēast* this appears in the *TOE* only in **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence.** It appears in the head category as *hafenlēast* and in **.Poor, without means** as *hafenlēas*.

### Material poverty

This interpolation from *the Peterborough Chronicle* is based on a Latin document comprising a Bull of Pope Agatho granting privileges to the abbey.<sup>198</sup> Here it says that any man who has made a vow to travel to Rome but is prevented by 'poverty' can gain equal virtue from travelling to Peterborough:

hwilc man swa haueð behaten to faren to Rome  
and he ne muge hit forðian, ouðer for untrumnisse . . . ouðer for  
haueleste ouðer for hwilces cinnes oðer need he ne muge  
þær cumon

Annal for 675

This is a clear instance of 'material poverty'.

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<sup>198</sup> This is considered to be a forgery.

*hēan*

As *hēan* this appears in a wide range of categories in the *TOE*. In **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** *hēan* appears once, in **.Poor, needy, indigent** and once as *hēanspēdig*<sup>op</sup> in **..Poor, without means**. It appears in the following other categories in the *TOE*:

**07.09 Shame, disgrace:**

**.Shamefully, ignominiously:** *hēane*

and with:

**.Person incurring:** *earming*

**07.09.02 Disgrace, shaming, humiliation:**

**.Humbled, shamed, brought low:** *hēan*

**.Ignominiously:** *hēanlice*

**..To humble, abase:** *hīēnan*

**.To degrade:** *gehīēnan*

and with

**..To humble, abase:** *(ge)niþerian*, *niþertorfian*<sup>og</sup>, *(ge)wanian*

**07.09.03 Infamy, ignominy, shame:**

**..Of deeds, feelings etc.:** *hēan*, *hēanlic*

**..To dishonour, degrade, insult:** *(ge)hīēnan*

and with

**..Dishonour, disgrace, shame:** *unweorþscipe*, *unweorþung*

**..Dishonourable, inglorious:** *unārwurþlic*<sup>o</sup>

**.Ignominiously, basely, disgracefully:** *unweorþlice*

**..Unworthily:** *unweorþe*



**.To dishonour, disgrace: (ge)unwurþian**

**..To become dishonoured: *unweorþian***

**08.01.03.01 Despondency:**

**.Depressed, sad, troubled: *hēan***

**..Troubled in mind/heart: *hēanmōd<sup>p</sup>***

and with

**..Troubled in mind/heart: *gēomormōd***

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction: *hēandōm<sup>o</sup>***

and with

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction: *iermþ, nīedþearf, nȳdbysgu<sup>op</sup>***

**.Great, dire adversity: *firenþearf<sup>op</sup>, hēahþearf<sup>p</sup>, nearonēd, nearosorg<sup>op</sup>***

**.State of misery: *nēadclam<sup>s</sup>, nīed,***

**..Time of distress, (present life): *wræchwīl<sup>op</sup>***

**..Troubles of this life: *woruldyrmþu***

**.Wretched man: *earming, ierming, þearf(ig)end, wræcca, wræcmæcg<sup>op</sup>***

**.Afflicted, full of trouble: *earm***

**..Troubled by distresses: *nȳdbysig<sup>op</sup>***

**..Gloomy, miserable: *blēat<sup>op</sup>, earmful, earmlic***

**.Full of hardship/misery: *wræcful, wræclīc***

**.Calamitous: *earm, gōdlēas<sup>o</sup>***

**.Wretchedly: *blēate<sup>op</sup>, earmlice***

**08.01.03.06.01 Affliction, misfortune, calamity:**

**.Unfortunate, suffering misfortune: *hēan***

and with

**.Unfortunate, suffering misfortune:** *earmsceapen*

**.Unhappily, miserably:** *þearfendlice*

#### **11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity:**

**.Of little worth/importance:** *hēan, hēanlic*

and with

**. A nonsense, triviality:** *lodrung<sup>os</sup>*; **and from eME 'poverty' items:**

**.A person of little account:** *lȳtling*

**.Of little worth/importance:** *ēaplic, lȳtel, unweorþ, unweorþlic*

**..Frivolous, trivial, useless:** *lȳtel*

**.Unworthily:** *unweorþlice*

#### **12.01.01.11 The common people**

**.Common, not noble:** *hēan*

and with

**..Of lowly rank:** *hēan, lāssa, lāst, unorne<sup>op</sup>, unweorþ*

There are then categories which seem antonymic to the previous ones, **11.03.02 Advancement, progress** in which *hēan* appears in **.To advance, develop**, however Clark Hall gives this as sense III and notes this is from the words *\*hīen* and *hȳn* 'high'. Presumably the entry in category **16.02.04 Worship, honour, praise** falls under the same item. There are no other items from the *TOE* or eME 'poverty' category in these categories.<sup>199</sup>

The dictionary definitions cluster around the same concepts. The *OED* has 'Mean,

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<sup>199</sup> Except in **16.02.04 Worship, honour, praise : .Zealous praise:** *nēodlof<sup>op</sup>* which reflects this unusual sense of *nēod* see section on this item.

abject, poor; humble, lowly'. The *MED* has '(a) Poor, needy, wretched; **riche and ~**; (b) contemptible; also, hateful, injurious; **holden for ~**, to hold (sb.) in contempt'.

There are examples of *heane* in *Hali Meiðhad* which are not here treated as examples of *hēan* which Millett in her glossary (1982) describes as noun 'oppressor' from \**hena*, an agent-noun from A *henan* (WS *hynan*); stem-vowel influenced by *hean* adjective.

*Hean* as an adjective or noun is rare in eME except in Bodley 343 and *Lazamon* (*Caligula*). In the *OED* its sense is 'Mean, abject, poor; humble, lowly' with eME citations from *Lazamon* and *Hali Meiðhad*. In the *MED* the sense is (a) 'Poor, needy, wretched; **riche and ~**'; 'with eME citations from Bodley 343 and *Lazamon* and (b) 'contemptible; also, hateful, injurious; **holden for ~**, to hold (sb.) in contempt'. with eME citations from *Lazamon* and the Katherine Group. It seems, then, that in the Katherine Group the negative sense MED (b) is the only one used.

As a verb it is more widespread in eME and seems to carry the sense of the adjective in MED (b). In the *OED* the sense is: 'To treat with contumely; to insult, humiliate, debase, lower' with eME citations from the *Lambeth Homilies*, *Lazamon* and *Hali Meiðhad*. In the *MED* it is: (a) 'To injure (sb.), oppress, persecute'; with citations from Bodley 343, *Lazamon*, the *Trinity Homilies* and the Katherine Group and (b) 'to hate, despise; ~ **at**, scoff at (sb.)'. with citations from *Body and Soul* (Wor. F. 174), *Lazamon* and *St Katerine*.

The verb form occurs in the AB texts with the sense of 'to oppress, persecute' and would not be part of the AB poverty category. As an adjective it is considered by d'Ardenne in her Etymological Appendix (EETS 248 1961). She notes that in the AB texts the adjective occurs only in *St. Katerine*:

þes heane 7 tes heatele tintreoh

this ignominious and this hateful torture



where she suggests the sense ignominious. This does not seem to carry a sense of poverty.

There is an instance of *heane* as a noun in *Hali Meiðhad*:

þe makeð of eorðlich mon ant wummon heouene engel,  
of heane hine, of fa freont  
what makes of an earthly man or woman a heavenly angel,  
of an oppressor a servant, of an enemy a friend

*HM* 6/2

and Millett (EETS 284) in her glossary notes about *heane* 'oppressor' agent-noun from *A hēnan*<sup>200</sup> with the stem-vowel influenced by *hēan* adj. The *MED* gives this as a citation to illustrate sense (b) of the adjective 'contemptible; also, hateful, injurious; **holden for** ~, to hold (sb.) in contempt'. Millett glosses the verb as 'oppresses', presumably from the same etymology. There seems to be difficulty in untangling the descent of these instances but it is included because of its use in *Lazamon*.

This word is not recorded beyond the fourteenth century. The *OED* gives the most recent instance as c.1400 *Apol. Loll.* 26.

### *nacod*

In addition to its physical sense of 'nakedness' *nacod* in OE carried metaphoric extensions which continue into eME.<sup>201</sup> There were also more abstract senses such as

<sup>200</sup> Clark Hall gives **hēnan** as **hīenan** 'to fell, prostrate, overcome: weaken, crush, afflict, injure, oppress' etc.

<sup>201</sup> Some with a physical base such as in the *TOE* categories **04.02.05.06.05.03.04**

*TOE* categories **05.10.05.04.13 A removal of that which obscures or conceals .Not covered, without covering** and **09.03.04.03 Plain, simple** in the head category.

Metaphoric sense extends into that of 'lacking in something' although *OED* sense 8b.

'Bare, lacking or defective in any respect' has citations only from Chaucer (1386) onwards, while the *MED* has sense 4 *naket in* 'lacking in something'.<sup>202</sup>

There were abstract senses for *nacod* in OE such as in the *TOE* categories **05.10.05.04.13 A removal of that which obscures or conceals .Not covered, without covering** and **09.03.04.03 Plain, simple** in the head category. These last continue into the AB texts, particularly *AW* where sins are referred to as *naket* and in which the discussion of the need for the confession of sin to be 'naked, unconcealed', draws on this metaphoric use.<sup>203</sup>

In both the *OED* and the *MED* the first sense is of being 'unclothed', and with the added implication of 'destitution' is *OED* sense 3a. and *MED* 1(b). The *OED* has also 6a. 'free from concealment'; 8a. 'Bare, destitute'; 14a. 'Left without any addition'. The *MED* has in addition sense 1 (d) 'naked at birth'.

Many of the words used in the vocabulary of poverty have additional senses in the area of 'want, lack'. *Nacod* does not appear to have had this sense in OE and does not appear in the corresponding *TOE* categories.<sup>204</sup> This is a new area for *nacod* and has developed by eME, the earliest citation for *MED* sense 4 *naket in* 'lacking in something' is *þu art poure 7 naket of halinesse* (*AW* 92 48a/10).

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**..Unsaddled and 13.02.08.04.03.02 Armed with a sword .. (Of sword) drawn, unsheathed.** These are *OED* 5a and 1d. and *MED* 2(a).

<sup>202</sup> *AW* Corpus MS 92 48a/10: *þu art poure & naket of halinesse*.

<sup>203</sup> *AW* 62 31b/11, 165 87b/5 naked sin; 156 82b/6-7, 162 86a/15, 163 86a/24 naked confession.

<sup>204</sup> In *OED* III 8. a. 'Bare, destitute or devoid of something' the earliest citation is c897 King Alfred's Pastoral Care. *Se lyte3a feond swa micle ieðlicor ðæt mod 3ewundað swa he hit on3iet nacodre ðære byrnan wærscipes*. Then 1220 onwards.

*nearones*

In the *TOE* *nearones* appears in the following categories:

**02.08.03 Pain, bodily discomfort:** *nearones*

**05.10.02 Narrowness, scantness of space:** *nearones*

.A narrow place, strait, confinement:

,Briefly, narrowly, within limits: *nearolice*

**07.03.04 A wretch, poor creature**

.(Of life etc.) limited, poor: *nearu*

**08.01.03.03 Anxiety:** *nearones*

**11.11.01 A physical difficulty, strait:** *nearu*

.Physical inconvenience, difficulty: *nearones*

The only other word from the 'poverty' category that shares any of these categories is *pearf* which appears in

**11.11.01 A physical difficulty, strait:**

.Need, distress, straits, difficulty: *pearf*

The *OED* has senses: 1a. 'Little breadth in relation to length'; b. fig. esp. 'narrow way' Matt. vii. 14. 2a. 'of no great extent'; b. 'lying or pressing close; confining'. 4a. 'sparing, parsimonious, mean'. 5a. 'Strict, close, precise, careful'.

The *MED* has senses: 1(a) 'Narrow, small'; (b) 'strait, constricting'; (d) 'constricted'. 2(a) 'Strict'.

*Nearones* is included because of its presence in the *TOE* 'poverty' category. In terms of dictionary definitions for the eME period, glossaries, antonyms or synonyms



within the texts it does not meet the linguistic criteria. In the *MED* there are no citations contemporary with the eME texts with any sense associated with 'poverty' but *narw(e)* sense 2.b. is 'humble, mean' with the earliest citation from Chaucer CT NP (Manly-Rickert) B. 4012 *A poure widwe . . . dwellynge in a narwe [vr. poure] cotage* where the association with the *widwe* and the variant *poure* reinforce the association with the concept of 'poverty'. In the *OED* *narrow* sense 3.b. is 'Limited in amount, very small or poor' with the earliest citation from Shakespeare *Ant. and Cleo.* 1606.

In the AB texts it can be seen to have central membership of the 'poverty' category on contextual grounds, as it is used as a sign of Christ's poverty on earth in context which is expressed through the criteria for alms where *nearones* is used of the lack of, or mean condition, of Christ's housing. It appears to be part of the encyclopedic knowledge, or assumptions, informing this concept.

### *nede*

*neid* plays a restricted role in the eME texts, appearing only in the sense 'necessity' which it shares with *pearf*. In the OE category of poverty, as might be expected, the *TOE* category **06.02.04.01 Want, need** contains a large proportion of words formed from *nied*, as well as *pearf*. *Nede*, however, in the 'poverty' category it appears only twice, once in **.A poor person** in the compound *niedwædla* and once in **.To be poor, to be in want** in the phrase *nied habban*. *Nied* has a strong presence in other categories, particularly those concerning necessity, which it shares with *pearf*<sup>205</sup>.

<sup>205</sup> In **06.02.04 Necessity, inevitability** *nied* is an element in every word in the head category where *pearf* appears once as *nīedpearf*; and in the corresponding adverbial subcategory **Necessarily, inevitably** there are nine items of which *nied* is an element in seven, and *pearf* appears once as *nīedpearflīce*. In the category as a whole there are thirty three items of which *nied* is an element in twenty. This element of necessity continues through its presence, with *pearfa*, in **12.05.06.03 Necessity, constraint**; and, again with *pearfa*, in **12.07 An obligation, bounden duty**.

### *nede/nied* - poverty senses

While *nied* is not a central part of the *TOE* poverty category and at first plays a restricted role in the ME texts, appearing in the sense 'necessity' which it shares with *þearf*, it is unlike *þearf*, which becomes more restricted into this sense and then disappears. *Nied* develops 'stand alone' forms such as *neod-fol* and moves further into the 'poverty' category and in PDE it has the form 'needy' as in 'poor and needy'. As might be expected, the *TOE* category **06.02.04.01 Want, need** contains a large proportion of words formed from *nied*, as well as *þearf*. The following category, **06.02.04.01.01 Need, distress, straits, difficulty**, contains PDE 'need' in the modern English metalanguage but does not contain any items with *nied* as a component. This is a small subcategory of nine items, but the matter of this subcategory is 'lacking in'<sup>206</sup> and *nied* does not seem to be identified in *TOE* with this component.

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction** is a large category. *Nied* appears as an element in six items. Other words that form part of the OE poverty field also appear - *hēan*, *iermþ*, *þearf*, *nearo-*, *earm* as well as the OE words *wræc-* and *gōdlēas* which are not part of the OE field of poverty but which both form part of the vocabulary of poverty in eME texts.

So although *nied* does not appear in the *TOE* poverty category, it has connections in other *TOE* categories to words that do, as well as words that go on to appear in the category for the eME texts.

The use of *nied-* in the eME period is extended in ways which lead it to form a larger presence in the vocabulary of poverty in eME than it does in OE. In the AB texts there are various forms based on *nied*. The root orthography varies throughout the texts between *neod-* and *ned-* except in the Wooing Group where there are no instances of *ned-*. However, there appears to be no differentiation of sense attached to the root orthography where this varies, in that *ned-* and *neod-* are interchangeably used

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<sup>206</sup> The subcategories are **.Needing, unprovided, lacking; .Stripped of, deprived of; .To lack, want for; .To do without**



in the general sense of 'need, necessity', even within the same text. Although *ned-/neod-* is in use during this period in the sense of 'in want of something', in the specific sense of 'poor' the earliest citation in the *MED* is from Wyclif. The eME texts reflect this, as the usual sense is of something 'necessary', or of a 'general need'. The context supplies the sense. The context may imply a condition of poverty, but *ned* could equally well be attached to other nouns. In the AB texts the phrase which continues from the *TOE* OE poverty category *neod habbeð* is used of general needs, not of needs associated with poverty<sup>207</sup>.

In the *MED* the entry *ned(e)ful*, adjective, is given a definition involving poverty in sense 2, defined as '(a) In want, poor; hungry, starving; in need of help; also, characterized by want, wretched [quot.: a1325]; (b) spiritually needy; (c) ~ of, of a structure: in need of (repair); (d) as noun: the needy, the poor; the spiritually needy [quots.: *Vices & V.(1)* 2nd, *Cursor*]; also, one needing counsel [quot.: a1325].' and the earliest citations involving poverty are from *Vices and Virtues* (Stowe 34) and the Corpus Manuscript of AW, followed by the Otho manuscript of Lazamon's *Brut*.

### *pearf*

Generally *pearf* plays a restricted role in the ME texts, appearing only in the sense 'necessity' which it shares with *nede*. In the OE category of poverty, *pearf* is a central item, both alone and in compounds. As might be expected, the *TOE* category **06.02.04.01 Want, need** contains a large proportion of words formed from *nied*, as well as *pearf*. *Pearf* has a strong presence in other categories, particularly those concerning necessity, which it shares with *nede*<sup>208</sup>.

<sup>207</sup> Citations from *MED Nede* noun sense 1 (e). *haven* ~ 'to have a need, be in need of something; be in need or want, be needy or poor'; for example: La3amon Brut Caligula 30767: *Pe king lette feden alle þa neode hafden*. This may be a continuation of the *TOE* phrase that appears in the category **Poverty, indigence: habban nied**. However in the AB texts this phrase is not used in a poverty context - eg AW 71a/19; 72b/16 etc.

<sup>208</sup> In **06.02.04 Necessity, inevitability nied** is an element in every word in the head category where *pearf* appears once as *nīedpearf*; and in the corresponding



Apart from the senses that are concerned with 'necessity' the *MED* has two entries for *tharf*, one as a noun and one as an adjective. The senses for the noun which are poverty related are: (a) A need; what is required or wanted; wants or needs; ?also, poverty, indigence [last quot.]; followed by three citations from MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv, classified as OE, one from the *Ormulum* and the last, referred to as '?also, poverty, indigence [last quot.]' from a1225 *Wint. Ben. Rule* (Cld d.3) 99/7 in which the Latin equivalent indicates a poverty component: *Gyf þonne swa mycel þearf þære stowe [L necessitas loci aut paupertas] beo . . .*

The adjective has a more definite sense of poverty in the *MED*: '(a) In need, indigent, poor; also, meek, humble; ~ **on gost**;' but here the citations are all from MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv with one from the *Lambeth Homilies* (Lamb 487) which is also classified as OE.

The *OED* concentrates on the senses concerned with 'necessity' and does not give any sense concerned with 'poverty'.

### *wædle*

With *þearf*, *wædle* was one of the central items in the *TOE* category **15.01.06**

**Poverty, indigence** appearing in ten of the items:

#### **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence:** *wādelnes, wādl, wādlung*

**.A poor person:** *niedwādla, wādla, wādling*

**.Poor, needy, indigent:** *wādla, wādlig, wādligend*

**.To be poor, to be in want:** *wādlīan*

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adverbial subcategory **Necessarily, inevitably** there are nine items of which *nied* is an element in seven, and *þearf* appears once as *niedþearflīce*. In the category as a whole there are thirty three items of which *nied* is an element in twenty. This element of necessity continues through its presence, with *þearfa*, in **12.05.06.03 Necessity, constraint**; and, again with *þearfa*, in **12.07 An obligation, bounden duty**.

It also appears in the subsequent category, **15.01.06.01 Begging** where forms four out of the seven items.

It appears additionally in:

**02.01.03.02 Barrenness, sterility:** *wædl*

**03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want**

**.Deficient in, poor in, wanting:** *wædla*

**.To be in want of, lack:** *wædlian*

Also present in the category **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want** is: . (Of things) scanty, scarce, meagre: *þearfendlic* and, from outside the 'poverty' category but from within the eME category that I have identified, *lȳtlung* and *wan(a)* in the head category, *wan(a)* in **.Wanting, not complete, deficient** and *ēapellic* in **.(Of things) scanty, scarce, meagre**.

In the *MED* the adjective *wædle* with the sense '(a) Poor, needy; (b) as noun: poor people, the poor' has no citations after *Lazamon's Brut*.

## **Words from OE but not in the *TOE* poverty category**

### ***blæðe***

The etymology of *blæðe* is obscure. The *OED* and the *MED* seem to suggest a probable OE origin but in its entry on *blate* 'miserable, wretched' the *OED* comments that OE *blēat* from which it comes would not give *blæðe* in ME but rather *blete* or *blethe*. The word that would give *blæðe* is *bleaðe* which has the sense 'weak, gentle, timid'. The *MED* suggests possibly a blend between the two. It is interesting that the *MED* gives the sense as 'Bare, destitute; wretched' which is reminiscent of the sense

of *westi* in *Wohunge* and provides another dimension to the senses which surround 'poverty'. This makes it problematic, but interesting, to trace its presence in the *TOE* categories.

The entries in the *TOE* for these words are:

*bleaþe*:

**06.01.08.06.06 Timidity:**

**.Timid, fainthearted:** *bleaþe*

**11.06 Disinclination to act, listlessness:**

**.Slothful, inactive:** *bleaþe*

There are no other words from the *TOE* or eME 'poverty' category in these categories.

*blēat*:

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction:**

**..Gloomy, miserable:** *blēat<sup>op</sup>*

**.Wretchedly:** *blēat<sup>op</sup>*

and with

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction:** *hēandōm<sup>o</sup>, iermþ, nīedþearf, niþ, nýdbysgu<sup>op</sup>*

**.Great, dire adversity:** *fīrenþearf<sup>op</sup>, hēahþearf<sup>p</sup>, nearonēd, nearosorg<sup>op</sup>*

**.State of misery:** *nēadclam<sup>8</sup>, nīed,*

**..Time of distress, (present life):** *wræchwīl<sup>op</sup>*

**..Troubles of this life:** *woruldyrmþu*

**.Wretched man:** *earming, ierming, þearf(ig)end, wræcca, wræcmæcg<sup>op</sup>*

**.Afflicted, full of trouble:** *earm*

**..Troubled by distresses:** *nýdbysig<sup>op</sup>*

**..Gloomy, miserable:** *earmful, earmlic*

**.Full of hardship/misery:** *wræcful, wræclīc*



**.Calamitous:** *earm, gōdlēas*<sup>o</sup>

**.Wretchedly:** *earmlīce*

Although it seems probable that the sense 'miserable, wretched' is a more likely source for *blæðe* in its eME sense than a word meaning 'timid' despite the *OED*'s observation, it is interesting that this is reinforced by the *TOE* categories in which it is not impossible that an item from the *TOE* 'poverty' category, or, more likely, the eME one might have shared a category with a connotation of 'timid', but they do not.

*Blæðe* is extant only in its five uses in the MS Caligula version of Laȝamon's *Brut*.

### *eðelich*

In the *TOE* *īepelic* is in the categories of **03.03.04.04 Littleness, smallness .(Of amount) small, little ..Little, small. slight:** *īepelic*, also **11.12 Easiness** where there are several entries including *ēapelicnes*<sup>og</sup> as the headword.

*ēapelic* appears in **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want .(Of things) scanty, scarce, meagre** where *þearfendlic* also appears. **03.03.04.05** is one of the two categories in which *wædla* appears outside poverty and begging and it also contains *wana* which becomes *wone* in the AB poverty vocabulary, so there are links here to the poverty category.

It also appears in **11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity .Of little worth/ importance.** This sense continues into the AB texts below. There are other words from the *TOE* category of poverty as well as from the items that I have identified in the eME 'poverty' category: **. A nonsense, triviality:** *lodrung*<sup>og</sup>; and from eME 'poverty' items: **.A person of little account:** *lýtling*; **.Of little worth/importance:** *ēaplic, hēan, hēanlic, lýtrel, unweorþ, unweorþlic lodrung*<sup>og</sup> which appears in a different form in **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence ..Beggar, person supported by alms:**

*loddere*.<sup>209</sup>

*ēapelīce* appears in **02.05.05.04 Sensual pleasure .Easy, pleasant, pleasurable:** *ēape* and **.Easily, comfortably** *ēap(e)*, *ēapelīce*. This sense may also continue into the AB texts.

I have included the sense 'humility' for *eðelich*, from contextual evidence, and although this sense does not appear in the *MED* and *OED* it is interesting that *ēapmōd* appears in *TOE* categories **07.07 Humility**, **12.01.01.12.01 Obedience, service**, and the Christian context is also present in the *TOE* in **16.01.01.01 Attributes of God** **..Gracious:** *ēapmōd*, so these would not be new overtones for *ēap*-.

Others of these *TOE* senses which are not reflected in the *MED* and *OED* are 'insufficiency, lack, want' and 'sensual pleasure'. 'Sensual pleasure' may also be present in the AB texts.

*MED*: 1. 'Insignificant, trivial, slight; of little worth or value'

2. 'Of low rank, lowly, poor'

3. 'Frail or weak (physically or morally) '

The *OED* distinguishes two main strands: A as adj. and B. as adv.

A. adj 1. 'Easy, not difficult'

2. 'Inconsiderable, slight, trifling often in antithesis to eche (=eternal): Of short duration'

3.a. 'Of a person: Low in station; mean in character' b. 'Of a thing: Of small value' B. adv 'Easily, without difficulty' b 'At an easy price, cheaply' (*MED* puts *OED* B. as a separate entry)

The *OED* does not record a sense of poverty but the *MED* has as sense 2 'Of low rank, lowly, poor' which possibly corresponds to *OED* sense 3.a. 'Of a person: Low in

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<sup>209</sup> *lodrunge*<sup>og</sup> appears in a different form in **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence ..Beggar, person supported by alms:** *loddere*.

station; mean in character'.

### *godles*

This appears in the *TOE* once in **08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction .Calamitous:** *gōdlēas*<sup>210</sup> where *earm* is in the same subcategory and there are many other items from the 'poverty' category from the *TOE* and eME.<sup>210</sup> Its definition<sup>211</sup> seems to be 'without good'. Its only citations in the sense 'without goods' in the *MED* are *HM* and Chaucer.<sup>212</sup>

### *helples*

In the *TOE* *help* appears in **02.08.12.01 Medical care, treatment; 11.10.01.02 Refuge, help, shelter; 11.12.02 Aid, help, succour** but as a form *helples* appears not to be extant in OE.

In the *MED* the following senses have citations before, or contemporary with, the AB texts: (a) 'Unable to act for oneself, helpless'; (b) 'poor, destitute, without relief; as noun: needy person, pauper'; (c) 'without support, abandoned, alone, companionless'; -- also as noun; (e) 'doomed, hopeless;' -- also as noun.

The *OED* has only one sense that is contemporary with the eME texts: 1. 'Destitute of help; having no assistance from others; needy'. (Of persons, their condition, etc.)

### *zeomere*

In the *TOE* *gēomores* and its forms appear in the following categories:

#### **08.01.03 Bad feeling, sadness:**

**.Sad, sorrowful:** *gēomor*

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<sup>210</sup> See section on *hæne* above for details.

<sup>211</sup> Its single instance is defined in Bosworth-Toller: *gōd-leās* adj 'without good, miserable, wretched', citation: *Dis ungesælige geār and ðæt gōdleāse - infaustus ille annus et omnibus bonis exosus* Bd. 3, I; S. 523, 33

<sup>212</sup> c1440 Chaucer *CT. Sh.* (Add 35286) B. 1480



**..Sad in mind/heart:** *gēomormōd*

with in **..Full of sorrows:** *earmcearig<sup>p</sup>*

#### **08.01.03.01 Despondency:**

**Troubled in mind/heart:** *gēomormōd*

with, immediately above, **.Depressed, sad, troubled:** *hēan*

#### **08.01.03.04 Grief:**

**.Sorrowing, mournful:** *gēomor, gēomorlic,*

**.Causing grief, horrid:** *gēomor, gēomorlice*

**.In a way that causes sorrow:** *gēomorlice*

with **.Lamentable, pitiable:** *earmlic*

#### **08.01.03.04.01 Complaint, lamentation:**

**.To lament, wail:** *gēomrian*

#### **08.01.03.07.02 Misery, trouble, affliction:** *gēomornes<sup>og</sup>, nearoþearf<sup>o</sup>*

with **.Oppressive, harassing:** *nearolic*

These items inhabit closely connected areas around extremely distressing emotions, and sometimes are applied to the cause of them as in **.Causing grief, horrid:** *gēomor, gēomorlice*. The presence of some items from the *TOE* 'poverty' category is notable although they are not numerous. Some of the categories overlap the concept of 'poverty' such as 'sadness' and 'affliction' but the extension into 'grief' is more extreme.

The *OED* for *yomering* gives senses connected to sound, as it is used in the Otho

manuscript of Lazamon's *Brut*, 'To murmur, complain; to lament, mourn' which preserves the connotations of the category in the *TOE* concerning grief; and senses about general misery such as 'Sorrowful, wretched, grievous, doleful' for *yomer*.<sup>213</sup> It does not have the connotations of unpleasantness in the *TOE* sub-category 'Causing grief, horrid'.

Of *yeomere* the *MED* has:

'1. (a) Wretched, miserable, unhappy; also, of a ship: in dire circumstances; of a voice: expressing sorrow, mournful, sad; -- used in adv. phrase; (b) of a time: unfortunate, unfavorable; of an affliction: causing suffering or distress' where the sense in (b) preserves the 'causing suffering' sense of the *TOE* and the only citations are both from the *Trinity Homilies*.<sup>214</sup>

2. (a) Of a person: cursed, damned; of a belief, thought, etc.: contemptible, base, vile; (b) unpleasant, disagreeable; of fodder: poor, meager. Here the sense of the *TOE* category **Causing grief, horrid** is extended into 'contemptible, base, vile'.

### *litell*

As it would in PDE, OE *lȳtel* and its forms occupy a range of categories in the *TOE*, some of which are for its literal and concrete senses. I propose to omit these<sup>215</sup> such as **03.03.04.04.01 Paucity, fewness, scarcity**, where the focus is quantity, and concentrate on its figurative uses and those which may be components in 'poverty'

<sup>213</sup> For *yomernes* 'wretchedness, misery' there is one citation only which is c.1250 *Kent. Serm.* in OE Misc. 28 *þo gode werkes þet is biter to þo yemernes of ure flesce* and here again an item with connections to 'poverty' is used of the flesh.

<sup>214</sup> a1225(?a1200) *Trin. Hom.* (Trin-C B.14.52) 169: *þe he þolede þe gimere pine; he makede ane reuliche meninge.* and 181: *Ðat child on his burde þoleð ... and cumeð of gemere hwile in to grimme wunienge*

<sup>215</sup> **02.01.04.01 Youth:** *lȳtel*; **02.03.01.04 Child:** *lȳtling*; **02.04.02.03.02 Short:** *lȳtel*; **03.03.04.04. Littleness, smallness:** *lȳt, lȳtel, lȳtelnes, lȳtle*; **03.03.04.04.01 Paucity, fewness, scarcity:** *lȳt, lȳtel*; **03.03.04.06 Diminution:** *(ge)lȳtlian*; **05.10.05.01 A little way, no great distance:** *lȳtel*; **05.11.01.02 Shortness/brevity in time:** *lȳtel, lȳtlian*.

such as **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want.**

There are eight remaining categories and *lȳtel* and its forms appear as follows:

**03.03.04.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want: *lȳtlung***

**.Insufficiently, too little, not enough: *to lȳt***

and with:

**03.03.04.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want: *wan(a)***

**.(Of things) scanty, scarce, meagre: *ēaþelic, þearfendlic***

**Wanting, not complete, deficient: *wana***

**.Deficient in, poor in, wanting: *wædla***

**.To be in want of, lack: *wædlian***

**.To lack, fail, fall short of: *wana bēon/wesan***

**03.03.05.01.03 Inferior**

**.Small, little, poor: *lȳtel***

**.Lowest, least: *læst***

**.To diminish, lessen (quality, degree etc.): *(ge)lȳtlīan***

and with:

**03.03.05.01.03 Inferior: *niþera, niþerlic***

**.Small, little, poor: *wāclīc***

**.In an inferior position: *niþer***

**.Mean, poor, paltry: *wāc, wāclīc***

**.To become poor, mean: *wācian***



#### **05.09 Weakness:**

**.To weaken:** *lȳtlīan*

and with:

#### **05.09 Weakness:** *untrumnes, wāc*

**.Without force, weak:** *wāc*

**.Feeble, weak, infirm:** *un(ge)trum, untrumlic*

**.Weakly, feebly:** *wāclīcē*

**.To weaken:** *awācian*

**.To be, become weak:** *(ge)wācian*

**.To make weak, weaken:** *awācan<sup>q</sup>, untrumian, (ge)wācan*

#### **07.03.03.02 To degrade, debase:**

**.To depreciate, make out to be inferior:** *gelȳtlīan*

there are no other words from the category 'poverty' here, but this is a very small category in the *TOE* with a total of only two words and a phrase.

#### **07.03.04 A wretch, poor creature:**

**.Mean, vile, wretched:** *lȳtel*

and with:

#### **07.03.04 A wretch, poor creature:** *earming*

**..Poor, miserable, wretched, greivous:** *earmsceapen*

**..Bad, sordid, vile:** *wāc*

**..(Of life, etc.) limited, poor:** *nearu*

#### **11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity:**

**.A person of little account:** *lȳtling*

**.What is of less importance: *lāssa***

**.Of little worth/importance: *lȳtel***

**..Frivolous, trivial, useless: *lȳtel***

and with:

**.A nonsense, triviality: *lodrung*<sup>os</sup>**

**.Of little worth/importance: *ēapellic, hēan, hēanlic, unweorþ, unweorþlic***

**.Unworthily: *unweorþlice***

#### **12.01.01.06.04 Inferiority of status, lowest place:**

**.Inferior in rank/position: *lȳtel***

**.Inferior, junior, lesser: *lāssa***

**.Less in degree: *lāes***

and with:

**.Meanness of condition: *wācnes***

#### **12.01.01.09 Bondage, slavery:**

**..A woman slave: *lȳtle***

and with:

#### **12.01.01.09 Bondage, slavery: *nīedhīernes*<sup>os</sup>**

**.One reduced to slavery by law: *nȳdþēowetling*<sup>o</sup>**

**.A slave, bondman: *nīedling, nīedþēow***

The presence here of senses 'vile' and its presence in the category **Vanity, idleness, frivolity** continues connections with these concepts which are noted in other poverty words. The connection with slavery and bondage is also interesting here.

In the *OED* the adjective has sense 8.a. 'Of things: Not of great importance or

interest; trifling, trivial' with citations from the Laud MS of the A.S. Chronicle on, dates as 1100. 8.b. 'Of persons: Not distinguished, inferior in rank or condition.' The first citation is dated as a 1220 *Bestiary*. The very negative senses that are found in some of the 'poverty' words are present in sense Sense 9 which is 'Paltry, mean, contemptible; little-minded' but its first citation is 1483.

In the *MED* the adjective has sense 3.c. (c) 'low in position or status, lowly, humble; unimportant; ~ **thef**, petty thief; ~ **and mikel**, lowly and great, one and all; (d) of friends: not close, not intimate; casual' and the first citation is a1300(a1250) *Bestiary* Arun. 292. The noun has sense 2.b. (b) 'a humble or lowly person; ~ **and muchel**, **the muchel and the ~**, the lowly and the great; one and all, everyone; (c) those who are spiritually weak; **the ~ of understondinge**, those of little understanding' with the first citation from MS Cotton Vespasian D. xiv. The verb has sense 1.d. (d) 'to reduce (sb. or sth.) in rank or significance; make (a sin) less heinous; *refl.* humble oneself' with a first citation from *Vices and Virtues* MS Stowe 34 dated as a1225(c1220) which echoes a sense of *nipren*.

### *mistrum*

This is the only instance recorded. It is from OE *trum* which is in *TOE* categories **05.08 Strength, 05.12.04.01 Stability, firmness, 05.13.06.01 Firm, stable, steady, 06.02.07.02 Constancy** and **12.07.02.02 Truth, faithfulness, good faith, sincerity**. It is defined in the *OED* as 'weak' and in the *MED* as 'Of a meal: scant, poor'

### *nipprenn*

This is an item which has accumulated a wide range of connected senses and, like *wrecche*, therefore appears in a number of *TOE* categories. I shall omit the literal senses<sup>216</sup> and the instances in which *nið* forms part of a word in which the *nið* element

<sup>216</sup> Such as **05.10.05.04.02.02 Under, beneath; 05.10.05.04.02.03.01 A low position, the bottom**



is the minor element.<sup>217</sup>

The *TOE* categories which remain are:

**03.03.05.01.03 Inferior: *nīpera, nīperlic***

**.In an inferior position: *nīper***

**.Lowest, least: *nīpemest***

and with

**.Small, little, poor: *lȳtel, wāclīc***

**.Mean, poor, paltry: *wāc, wāclīc***

**.Lowest, least: *lǣst***

**.Poorly, meanly, cheaply: *wāclīce***

**.To diminish, lessen (quality, degree etc.): *(ge)lȳtlīan***

**.To become poor/mean: *wācian***

**07.07.Humility:**

**.Humble: *nīperlic***

and with

**..Poor in spirit, humble: *earmful***

**..Poor, mean, sorry: *earmlic***

**..Meanly, abjectly: *earmlīce***

**07.09.02: Disgrace, shaming, humiliation:**

**..To humble, abase: *(ge)nīperian, nīpertorfīan*<sup>og</sup>**

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<sup>217</sup> Such as *nīpcwealm* 'destruction' where no related items are in the category, or *nīðdraca* 'dragon'.

and with

**07.09.02: Disgrace, shaming, humiliation: *unweorþung***

**.Humbled, shamed, brought low: *hēan***

**.Ignominiously: *hēanlice***

**..To humble, abase: *hīenan, (ge)wanian***

**..To degrade: *gehīenan***

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction: *nīþ***

and with

**08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction: *hēandōm<sup>o</sup>, iermþ, nīedþearf, nýdbysgu<sup>op</sup>***

**.Great, dire adversity: *firenþearf<sup>op</sup>, hēahþearf<sup>p</sup>, nearonēd, nearosorg<sup>op</sup>***

**.State of misery: *nēadclam<sup>g</sup>, nīed,***

**..Time of distress, (present life): *wræchwīl<sup>op</sup>***

**..Troubles of this life: *woruldyrmþu***

**.Wretched man: *earming, ierming, þearf(ig)end, wræcca, wræcmæcg<sup>op</sup>***

**.Afflicted, full of trouble: *earm***

**..Troubled by distresses: *nýdbysig<sup>op</sup>***

**..Gloomy, miserable: *blēat<sup>op</sup>, earmful, earmlic***

**.Full of hardship/misery: *wræcful, wræclic***

**.Calamitous: *earm, gōdlēas<sup>o</sup>***

**.Wretchedly: *blēat<sup>op</sup>, earmlice***

**08.01.03.09.05 Enmity: *nīþ***

There are no other 'poverty' items

**08.01.03.09.08 Envy, jealousy:**

**.Spite, rancour, envy:** *nīḥ*

**.Full of envy:** *nīḥful, nīḥig*

**.To envy, hate:** *nīḥan<sup>o</sup>*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**12.05.04: Strife, hostility:** *nīḥ, orlegnīḥ<sup>p</sup>*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**12.05.06.02 Oppression:**

**.To oppress:** *(ge)nīḥerian*

and with

**12.05.06.02 Oppression:**

**.Forcibly, oppressively:** *nearwe*

**12.08.06.02: Wickedness, evil:** *nīḥ, nīḥscipe<sup>o</sup>*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**12.08.06.02.01 Wrong, evil-doing:**

**..An evil/malicious deed:** *nīḥ*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**12.08.06.02.04 Darkness, evil:**

**..Deepest, most heinous:** *nīḥemest*

There are no other 'poverty' items.



**13.02.02 Battle:** *nīþ, nīþþlega<sup>op</sup>, nīþweorc*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**14.03.03.01 Accusation:**

**.To accuse:** *(ge)nīþerian*

and with

**.To accuse:** *āhēnan<sup>g</sup>, (ge)hīenan*

**14.03.03.09.01 Unfavourable judgement, condemnation:**

**.Deserving condemnation:** *(ge)nīþerigendlic*

**.To condemn:** *(ge)nīþerian*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**16.01.05 Hell, lower world, abode of the dead:**

**.Abyss, ness, pit of hell:** *nīþ<sup>a</sup>*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

**16.01.05.01 Damnation, perdition, reprobation:** *(ge)nīþerung*

**Hell-torment:** *hellenīþ<sup>op</sup>*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

In the *OED* the verb *nither* is given the sense 'To bring or thrust down, to bring low, abase, humble, oppress, straiten etc.' Also in OE 'to condemn'. *Nether* is given largely literal senses connected to 'low' but sense 5. is 'Denoting the earth or things upon it, in contrast to heaven or the upper regions and sense 6. 'Denoting what lies, or is imagined as lying, beneath the earth: esp. nether world or regions.'

The *MED* has literal senses for the adjective and then sense 2 is 'Lower in status, lower morally or spiritually, inferior'

For the adverb it has 'Down, downward, low; to defeat (sb. or sth.) humiliatingly, disgrace.'

For the verb *netheren* it has (a) To cast (sb.) down; flatten (a hill); (b) to humble (sb., oneself); (c) to oppress (sb. or sth.); (d) to disgrace (sb.); debase (oneself); (e) to impair (health); subvert (laws). and for the transitive verb *nither leien* it has To lay (sth.) down.

### *unnorne*

In the *TOE* *unorne* appears in:

#### **12.01.01.11 The common people**

**..Of lowly rank: *unorne*<sup>op</sup>**

and with

**.Common, not noble: *hēan***

**..Of lowly rank: *hēan, lāessa, lāest, unweorþ***

and *unornlic* appears in

#### **04.04.07.01 Mode of dressing, fashion**

**.(Of clothes) plain, worn, mean: *unornlic*<sup>o</sup>**

there are no other 'poverty' items

#### **07.10.03.01 Unornamented, unadorned:**

**.(Of clothes) plain, worn, mean: *unornlic*<sup>o</sup>**

The *OED* gives the adjective sense 1. 'Of persons: Plain (in manners or

appearance); humble, simple; mean, wretched' with the first citation from OE from *The Battle of Maldon*.

The *MED* gives (a) 'Plain, simple, unelaborated; also, without physical appeal, unattractive; of food or drink: not dainty, not choice' with the first citation from the *Ormulum* of food; (b) 'lowly in rank or status, not highborn; also, ?modest in manner or dress, of humble bearing [a few quotes. could also be construed as (a)]' with the first citation from the *Ormulum* of Christ as a child; (c) 'decrepit, enfeebled; ~ age, decrepitude' with the first citation from *The Owl and the Nightingale* MS Cotton Caligula A. ix but the next from a1450 (1412) from Hoccleve.

### *untrumnesse*

In the *TOE* *untrumnes* appears in

**02.08.02 Disease, infirmity, sickness:** *untrumnes/untrymnes, untrymmigo<sup>8</sup>, untrymþ*

**.Infirm condition:** *untrumhād<sup>o</sup>*

**.Sick, ill, diseased:** *untrum, untrym(m)ig<sup>8</sup>*

**..To be taken ill/be unfirm:** *(ge)untrumian*

**..To fall ill:** *untrymigan<sup>8</sup>*

**..To make weak, enfeeble:** *(ge)untrumian*

and with

**..To reduce (by medical treatment), weaken:** *wanian*

There are no other 'poverty' items in the category but *wāc-* and *wan-* are present as affixes.

**02.08.11.02 Mental weakness:** *untrumnes*

There are no other 'poverty' items.



#### **05.09 Weakness: *untrumnes***

**.Feeble, weak, infirm: *un(ge)trum, untrumlic***

**.To make weak, weaken: *untrumian***

and with

#### **05.09 Weakness: *wāc***

**.Without force, weak: *wāc***

**.Weakly, feebly: *wāclīce***

**.To weaken: *āwācian***

**.To be/become weak: *(ge)wācian***

**.To reduce (by medical treatment), weaken: *wanian***

#### **16.02.04.07.03 Confirmation:**

**.Not confirmed: *untrymed***

There are no other 'poverty' items in this category.

The *OED* has the sense 'Weakness, infirmity, ill health' which reflects the categories above. The *MED* has similarly 'Infirmity, sickness; also *fig.*; also, a disease, disorder, an illness.'

This word is a 'family resemblance' member of the category 'poverty' in the *Ormulum*, and its narrow range of *TOE* categories is reflected in its senses in the *OED* and the *MED* in eME.

#### ***unnweorþ***

This appears in the *TOE* in the following categories:

#### **07.03.03.01 Empty, useless, worthless:**

**.Good for nothing, worthless: *unweorþ***

**.Despised, despicable, worthless: *unweprþ***

There are no other 'poverty' items.

#### **07.03.05.01 Ignobility:**

**..Ignoble, disgraceful, infamous:** *unweorþlic*

There are no other 'poverty' items.

#### **07.09 Shame, disgrace:**

**.Shameful, disgraceful:** *unweorþ*

and with

#### **07.09 Shame, disgrace:** *hienþ(o)*

**.Person incurring:** *earming*

**..Shamefully, ignominiously:** *hēane*

#### **07.09.02 Disgrace, shaming, humiliation:** *unweorþung*

and with

**.Humbled, shamed, brought low:** *hēan*

**.Ignominiously:** *hēanelīce*

**.To humble, abase:** *hēanan, (ge)nīþerian, nīþertorfian<sup>og</sup>, (ge)wanian*

**..To degrade:** *gehīenan*

#### **07.09.03 Infamy, ignominy, shame:**

**..Dishonour, disgrace, shame:** *unweorþnes, unweorþscipe, unweorþung*

**.Ignominiously, basely, disgracefully:** *unweorþlice*

**..Unworthily:** *unweorþe*

**.To dishonour, disgrace:** *(ge)unwurþian*

**..To become dishonoured:** *unweorþian*

and with

**..Of deeds, feelings etc.:** *hēan, hēanlic*

**.To dishonour, degrade, insult:** *(ge)hīenan*

#### **08.01.03.05.05 Indignation:** *unweorþscipe, unweorþung*

**.Indignantly:** *unweorþlice*

There are no other items from 'poverty' in this category, but it is very small and there is only one other item.<sup>218</sup>

#### **11.08.04 Vanity, idleness, frivolity:**

**.Of little worth/importance:** *unweorþ, unweorþlic*

**.Unworthily:** *unweorþlice*

**.To be worthless:** *āweorþan*

and with

**.A nonsense, triviality:** *lodrung<sup>og</sup>*

**.A person of little account:** *lȳtling*

**.Of little worth, inportance:** *ēaplic, hēan, hēanlic, lȳtel*

**..Frivolous, trivial, useless:** *lȳtel*

#### **12.01.01.11 The common people:**

**..Of lowly rank:** *unweorþ*

and with

**.Common not noble:** *hēan*

**..Of lowly rank:** *hēan, læssa, læst, unorne<sup>op</sup>*

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<sup>218</sup> **.To be indignant at:** *underniman*



### 15.02.02 Cheap: *unweorb*

There are no other 'poverty' words in this category, although *eðeliche* in the AB texts carries the sense 'of low monetary value'.

The *OED* has the sense 'unworthy' and the verb has 'to treat with dishonour or disdain'. The *MED* has of the adjective and with citations from the eME period (a) 'Of a person or creature: lacking honor, respect, or esteem; of insufficient merit, undeserving, unworthy; also, contemptible, base, mean; also, with inf.: unworthy (to do sth.)' (b) 'of a thing, wealth, prayers, a sin, etc.: of little or no value, worthless; despicable, hateful; displeasing' (c) 'unmerited, undeserved; **haven** ~, with inf.: to consider it dishonorable (to do sth.), disdain' which echoes the categories in the *TOE*. Of the noun it has 'Dishonor, disrespect'.

Again there appear to be common threads that run through the additional senses of these words, and some of the surprising ones crop up again such as **Vanity, idleness and frivolity** as well as the negative ones connected to evil.

### *wac*

*wāc* disappeared in the fourteenth century and was replaced by *weak*<sup>219</sup>.

In the *TOE* *wac* appears in:

**03.03.05.01.03 Inferior** in sub categories **.Small, little, poor:** *wāclīc*; **.Mean, poor, paltry:** *wāc*, *wāclīc*; **Poorly, meanly, cheaply:** *wāclīce*; **.To become poor, mean:** *wācian*. In the modern English metalanguage here 'poor' is concerned with 'inadequate' as the quality of being 'wanting' or 'lacking'. It is not used with the sense 'material poverty'.

**05.09 Weakness** in the head category; **.Without force, weak:** *wāc*; **.To be, to**

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<sup>219</sup> *OED* entry for 'weak'.

**become weak:** *(ge)wācian*; **To make weak, weaken:** *āwācan<sup>q</sup>*, *(ge)wæcan<sup>220</sup>*

The *OED* gives three senses:

- a. 'Pliant, flexible' (only OE).
- b. 'Lacking in strength, vigour, endurance or courage; inferior physically or morally'.
- c. 'Lowly in status or degree; insignificant'.

The *MED* gives:

*wōk*

1. (a) 'Easily bent or broken, not sturdy etc'
- (b) 'insignificant, paltry, worthless; also insubstantial, ephemeral'. etc
2. (a) 'Of a person, a bodily member, human nature: deficient in physical strength, weak' etc
- (b) 'of the earth' (1400 on)
- (c) 'relatively deficient in fighting strength'; as noun 'those who are defenceless'
- (d) 'helpless, needy; powerless; impotent'; as noun 'those in need of help'.
3. (a) 'Of a person, the flesh, human nature, morally or spiritually feeble, readily led in to sin' etc.
- (b) 'lacking in courage or resolve' etc
- (c) 'deficient in intellectual power or understanding' etc
- (d) 'of faith or volition not firm or steadfast' etc
- (e) 'of thoughts, desires, utterances vain, idle' ; also 'arising from moral frailty' etc
4. as adv 'feebly' etc (only citation AW 65 33b/2 below)

*wōkli* adv. has only two citations, both from AB texts, AW 152 80a/15 and HM 4/16 below.

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<sup>220</sup> With *untrum*, a possible link to *mistrum*, which appears the head category and several of the subcategories. *untrum* 'infirm, weakly, sick, ill' Clark Hall.

*wōknesse* has one sense contemporary with the AB texts 'deficiency of moral or spiritual strength' etc. The first citation is from *Vices and Virtues*, but the remaining three are two from *AW* and one from *Wohunge*.

### *wannseenn*

The *MED* gives the derivation as 'From OE *-wansian* or ON (cp. OI *vansa* to do too little & *vansi* lack, want).' If the derivation is OE *wansian* then this appears in the *TOE* only in **03.03.04.06 Diminution .To diminish, lessen, make smaller**

The *MED* has 1a and 1b from later than this<sup>221</sup>

(b) to become shorter;

(c) to cause (sth., people) to be diminished, reduce in size, extent, or number; reduce (sth.) to nothing, do away with; also, dispense (wealth); take away (sth. from sb.). and 2.

(b) to decline in importance, influence, status, etc., be diminished in dignity or esteem; ~ **and decresen; waxen and ~; ~ awei**, be dismissed from the mind, fade away;

(c) to diminish (sb.) in honor or status; also, reduce (sb.) with respect to the heavenly reward [1st quot.].

### *wansiðe*

While the two elements of *wansiðe* are from OE they were not combined before eME and so this item does not appear in the *TOE*. The *OED* has simply 'misery' and the *MED* for *wane* 2 has (a) 'A woeful or miserable state, misfortune, adversity; also, an undesirable thing, an affliction, a tribulation; also, destruction; ~ **sith**, wretchedness' with all the citations for it from *Lazamon's Brut*.

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<sup>221</sup> 1400 and 1450 respectively as the earliest citations.



## ***wrecche***

The development of *wrecche* is complex. It appears in the following range of categories in the *TOE*:

### **5 Existence:**

#### **12 To move, be in motion**

05.12.02.04 To cast out, drive away

05.12.05.03.04 To come/go out from

### **6 Mental Faculties:**

#### **01 The head (as seat of thought)**

06.01.08.05.01.01 Wondrous, glorious, marvellous

### **8 Emotion:**

#### **01 Heart, spirit, mood, disposition**

08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction

08.01.03.07.03 Suffering, torment, pain

08.01.03.09.05 Enmity

### **11 Action and utility:**

#### **01 Action, doing, performance**

11.01 Action, doing, performance

### **12 Social interaction:**

#### **04 Fellowship, union, association**

12.04.04 Solitude

12.05.04.02 Vengeance, revenge

#### **06 A province, country, territory**

12.06.05 A foreign country

12.06.05.01 State of exile, banishment

#### **08 Principle, character**

12.08.06.02.02 A bad man, an inhuman person

**14 Law and Order:**

**03 Right of holding court, jurisdiction**

14.03.03.09.03 Outlawry

**05 Punishment:**

14.05 Punishment

14.05.02 Torment, punishment

14.05.03 Retribution, requital

**16 Religion:**

**01 A divine being**

16.01.05.02.01 The Devil

16.01.05.02.02 Other terms for devils

**02 Religion**

16.02.04.11 Pilgrimage

It is difficult to see from most of this range of senses where there could be a connection to the OE or eME category of poverty. However there are some.

Category **8 Emotion** listed above also includes items from the *TOE* poverty category:

**8 Emotion:**

**01 Heart, spirit, mood, disposition**

08.01.03.06 Adversity, affliction

where OE 'poverty' items *earm*, *hēan*, *iermþ*, *nearo-*, *nied* and *þearf* are represented<sup>222</sup>.

There is a subcategory, **.Time of adversity** which contains no element from the

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<sup>222</sup> In **.Calamitous** appears the only OE instance of *gōdlēas*<sup>o</sup> which becomes *godles*, part of the AB poverty vocabulary.

OE poverty category, although a compound using *earm* is found in the AB texts in this sense<sup>223</sup>. It carries two subcategories:

**..Time of weariness:** *langunghwīl<sup>op</sup>*

**..Time of distress (present life):** *wræchhwīl<sup>op</sup>*

and in the second, *wræch* is performing the same function as the *earm* compound in the instance from *Hali Meiðhad*.

Subcategory **12.04.04 Solitude** contains items from the OE poverty category but in a neutral function - for example *wineþearfende<sup>p</sup>* in **.Friendless, without friends** where *þearfende* has the sense of lacking.

It is interesting that in the subcategory **.A vagrant, vagabond** only *hleapere* and *woriend* appear so there may be no poverty sense associated with these referents in OE.

The definitions in the *OED* are general, giving senses around 'misery', 'distress' and 'baseness'. The condition of being wretched may be through poverty but there is no clear sense of the nature of *wrecche*, which is not surprising given its wide and varied use.

In the *MED* there is a long entry for *wrecche* and its compounds. There seem to be two strands which run throughout. The first is that of 'hardship and misfortune', including 'poverty'. The second is concerned with being 'base, vile and contemptible'. There is also the sense of being 'low in the social or economic hierarchy' that shades into being humble.<sup>224</sup> The citations are from a wide range of eME and ME texts.

It is clear that in OE *wrecche* had a wide range of polysemous senses, which it brought into the poverty category in the eME period when it became a central word for 'poor'.

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<sup>223</sup> *Earm-hwile* see section on *earm* above

<sup>224</sup> A later sense appears which is that of 'a miser, a niggard'



*wone*

As OE *wana* this does not appear as a form in the OE poverty category, although it does appear as an element in compound words and it shares other categories with items from the *TOE* category. It appears in the AB texts as *wone* (Royal *weane*<sup>225</sup>).

In the *TOE* category **10.02 Want, lack** *wana* is in the head category.

It is the only entry in **.One less than (with numerals):** *ānes wan (þe . . . )* <sup>226</sup>

It appears in the subcategory **.Lacking, not possessed of:** *wan, (ge)wana*

In the subcategory **.Destitute of, without** there is also *earm* from the OE poverty field.

In *TOE* category **10.02.01 Loss, deprivation** *wana* appears in the head category.

In *TOE* category **03.03.04.05 Insufficiency, lack, want** *wan/a* forms appear:

**03.03.04.05 insufficiency, lack, want:** *wan(a)*

In the subcategory **.Wanting, not complete, deficient:** *wana*

In the subcategory **.To lack, fail, fall short of:** *wana bēon/wesan*

Other items from the OE poverty field in the same category are:

**.(Of things) scanty, scarce, meagre:** *þearfendlic*

**.Deficient in, poor in, wanting:** *wædla*

**.To be in want of, lack:** *wædlian*

So although *wan/a* does not appear in the *TOE* category of poverty it has connections with items within it.

As an element *wan/a* appears frequently:

**15.01.06 Poverty, indigence:** *wanæht<sup>op</sup>, wanhaf(e)nes<sup>g</sup>, wanhafolnes<sup>g</sup>, wanspēd, wanspēdignes<sup>o8</sup>*

<sup>225</sup> d'Ardenne and Dobson (EETS SS7 1981) note of *St Katherine*. B 879 that T has *wone* 'need, want, poverty' where B has the false form *weone* and R *weane* 'woe, misery'. The Latin is inconclusive between T and R but if T *wone* is original this would explain the variants.

<sup>226</sup> This is the same use as it has in *St Katherine* B. 23 *twa wone of twenti*. R consistently replaces *wone* with *weane* in St K

**.A poor person:** *wanhafa*

**.Poor, needy, indigent:** *wanhafol*, *wanspēdig*

So in OE *wana* shares categories with poverty items and appears as an element in the *TOE* category of poverty.

In the *OED* *wane* n. has two senses which are supported with citations from the thirteenth century:

1. 'Want, lack, shortage, absence of'

2. 'Need, want, poverty'

and the *MED* *wane*<sup>1</sup> n. which has:

(a) 'The state or condition of penury, deprivation, neediness, etc., want; also, famine, dearth';

(b) 'the absence or lack (of sth.); a deficiency or shortage (of sth.); **water** ~, a shortage or lack of water; **ben on ~ of his hele**, to lack curability, fail to heal'.<sup>227</sup>

## Words from ON

### *lah*

The *MED* and the *OED* agree on an ON origin, and the *OED* gives the derivation as ON. *lág-r* (Sw. *låg*, Da. *lav*). In the AB texts *lahe* is used in every group, and in a range of contexts with both physical and figurative uses.

In the *OED* there are I. literal senses, and II. figurative senses. Of the transferred or figurative senses those contemporary with the AB texts are:

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<sup>227</sup> *MED* has *wane*<sup>2</sup> which has:

(a) 'A woeful or miserable state, misfortune, adversity; also, an undesirable thing, an affliction, a tribulation; also, destruction; ~ **sith**, wretchedness; an adversity; ~ **slaughtes**, unfortunate killings, much carnage; ~ **and wo (wraak)**, **wo (woue)** and ~'

(b) 'a feeling of sorrow, distress, misery, or anxiety'.

This appears in the AB texts as *weane* and I have not included this.

5. 'Of humble rank, station, position, or estimation'. (not 11. 'humble in disposition' etc. as this sense has its earliest citation as 1377 PPl B. xx. 36)

6. a. 'Of inferior quality, character or style; wanting in elevation, commonplace, mean.'

17. 'to lay low' c. in immaterial sense, fig. : 'To abase, humble'

(not 18. 'to lie low' 'a. literally b. fig. 'be humbled or abased' where the earliest citation is 1300 Cursor Mundi 1649)

In the *MED*, apart from literal senses, contemporary with the AB texts there are:

5a (a) 'Low in rank or social status, low in the ecclesiastical hierarchy';

(c) 'low in fortunes, state, or condition; poor; unfortunate; also, defeated in battle; of a city: small, unimportant; of a place: dishonorable; of renown or reputation: not great, obscured';

5b (a) 'Low in the order of beings, low in the order of created things, low in quality or nature, inferior'<sup>228</sup>

(b) 'low in any hierarchy of holiness or spiritual perfection; -- used of persons, classes of persons, a way of life, an activity, a prayer, a degree of feeling or virtue';

5c. (d) 'morally low, base, ignoble'

5d. 'Humble, meek, unpretentious: (a) of persons, the heart, spirit, countenance; also, in proverb; (b) of actions, words, places; ~ **humblesse**, deep humility'.

### *meoc*

In the *OED* the derivation of *meek* is given as ON. *miúk-r* 'soft, pliant, gentle'

In the *OED* the noun *meekness* is given the sense 'The quality of being meek; gentleness of spirit; humility' and the adjective is given 1. a. 'Gentle, courteous, kind. Of a superior: Merciful, compassionate, indulgent.' 1. b. is 'As connoting a Christian virtue. Free from haughtiness and self-will; piously humble and submissive; patient

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<sup>228</sup> And in this sense ~ *kinde*, Christ's human (as opposed to divine) nature



and unresentful under injury and reproach.' Sense 2. is 'Of animals: Tame, gentle, not fierce.' The adverb *meekly* is 'In a meek or humble manner.' The first citation for all these senses is from the *Ormulum*.

There are two senses which have first citations which are later: sense 1. c. of the adjective is 'Submissive, humble. In an unfavourable sense' and the first citation here is 1340-70 *Alisaunder*; and sense 3. a. In physical applications: Not violent or strong; mild, gentle.

The *MED* for the adjective has:

1. (a) Gentle, quiet, unaggressive; of a woman: modest; of eyes: soft; (b) full of loving kindness, benevolent, kind, sweet; (c) merciful; (d) friendly, affable, courteous, gracious; (e) compassionate, sympathetic. Senses a. and b. both have their first citations from the *Ormulum*. The subsequent senses are all post 1300.
2. has (a) Having the virtue of humility, humble, unassuming; (b) good, virtuous; (c) contrite. The first has a first citation from the *Ormulum* and the remainder are post 1300.
3. (a) Submissive, obedient, docile, amenable; (b) of an animal: tame, gentle; also as noun; (c) lowly, poor, unimportant, abject; -- also as noun; (d) weak, helpless. Of these, b. is cited from the *Ormulum* for its first extant record, and the others are post 1300.
4. is (a) Soft, supple, pliant; (b) of the sea: calm; (c) of clothes: modest, not gaudy; (d) of a disease: benign, not virulent. a. and b. are post 1400 but c. has earliest citations from AW and it is interesting that 'meek' here is being used in the same sense that the *Ormulum* would use *unnorne*.

This is present because of its use in the *Ormulum* in collocation with words from the poverty category.

### *wontreaðe*

In the AB texts *wontreaðe* is found in all three groups. The *OED* gives its etymology as ON. *vandræði* 'difficulty, trouble'.

The *OED* definition includes 'poverty' giving *Misery, distress, hardship; adversity, poverty* but the *MED* does not include the 'poverty' component, giving (a) 'Woe, misery; wretchedness; difficulty, adversity; a state of misery, lamentable condition; also, a reversal of fortune, an adverse circumstance, affliction, a misery; ?also, a tale of woe, lamentation'<sup>229</sup>

### *nowcin*

In the AB texts *nowcin* is found only in the Katherine Group<sup>230</sup> in *St Katherine, St Marharet, SW* and *HM*. *OED* gives the source language as ON. *nauðsyn* 'need' = MDu. *nootsin, noodzin*.

The definitions in the *OED* and *MED* are general. The *OED* has only 'Hardship, distress'. The *MED* has 'An affliction, a misery; affliction, privation, want', but has no differentiation between the strands in the citations. In each the citations are only from the Katherine Group and Cursor Mundi.

### *usell*

Found in the *Ormulum* only. The *OED* gives 'wretched, miserable' for *usell* and 'wretchedness' for *uselldom*. The *MED* gives 'Wretched, miserable; lowly; of someone's life: deprived (with respect to food and clothing)' for *usell* and for *uselldom* 'A state characterized by deprivation, wretchedness.'

Townend considers this to be one of the group of loans in the *Ormulum* that is unique in that they show a late Norse sound change, here the denasalisation of the negative

<sup>229</sup> *MED* (b) in conventional collocations, usu. alliterating: ~ **and wo (wane), wo (wane) and ~, for wo ne for ~, mid ~ and mid care**, etc.; (c) ?in surname.

<sup>230</sup> So not in AW or the Wohunge Group, whereas *meseise* is found only in AW and the Wohunge Group.

prefix from *un-* to *u-*, and he suggests this indicates it may be a late adoption (2002 p. 208).

### ***wanntsumm***

The *OED* gives the sense 'Indigent, poor; devoid of' and has citations from the *Ormulum*, where it has one instance, and *Cursor Mundi*. Both the *OED* and the *MED* agree that the word comes from *want*. At this stage, and as it is used in AW for example, *want* seems to mean 'devoid of' or 'lacking' and only later comes into the category of 'poverty'.<sup>231</sup>

In the *MED wantsum* is gives the sense 'in want, ~ of, deprived of' with the two citations as above.

## **Words from OFr**

### ***beggere/begger(e)/beggild***

These items are found only in AW.

The only sense in the *OED* that is contemporary with the AB texts is 1. a. 'One who asks alms, especially habitually; one who lives by so doing'.

The *MED* has as contemporary senses:

for the verb (a) 'To ask for (sth.) as a gift, beg; ask alms, live as a beggar; beg for one of the mendicant orders'; ppl. *as* n.; (although 'beg for one of the mendicant orders' is illustrated by citations dated after the AB texts).<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> *MED want* adj. (a) The state of penury, want; also, a shortage or lack of something; first citation a1400 (a1325) *Cursor*(Vsp A. 3) 10406: *Pai þat stad er in þair blis, Wit-vten want has alle þair wis*.

<sup>232</sup> Chase (1988) also has mendicant friars dated after the AB texts as R3.3.2.4. Friar: *mendinant* 1386 and other religious associations with 'beggar' come in R3.3.10 Other religious. *Beghard*: Beggar c. 1384 so this is post the AB texts.



for *begger(e)* (a) 'A beggar, mendicant'; (other senses are post AB texts).

for *beggild* 'A beggar' [orig., 'female beggar'].

In AW there is one instance each of *beggere*; *beggilde*; *beggin(v)*. There is no certainty about the origin of the word. The *OED* tentatively suggests it could come from OE *bedecian* which is part of the *TOE* category **15.01.06.01 Begging** but adds it is more likely to be from OFr as there are no surviving instances between the OE use in Alfred's Pastoral Care and these citations in AW which are the first attestations of all these three forms.

### *hearlot*

There are three instances, all in AW.

In the *MED* they illustrate sense (a) 'A man of no fixed occupation, an idle rogue, a vagabond or beggar', and are the earliest citations.

The *OED* has the sense 1. 'A vagabond, beggar, rogue, rascal, villain, low fellow, knave. In later use (16-17th c.), sometimes a man of loose life, a fornicator; also, often, a mere term of opprobrium or insult' and notes it has a masculine referent in the thirteenth century, but a feminine by the fifteenth.

### *meoseise*

Among the AB texts *meoseise* is found only in AW and *Wohunge*<sup>233</sup> (*Wohunge* - *meseise*) as is *pouerte*.

Both the *OED* and the *MED* divide the noun into strands of *OED* 1 'Distress, affliction; trouble, misery; extreme suffering or discomfort' *MED* 1 'physical or mental distress or general misery' and then the source of the misery *OED* and *MED* 2. which include 'poverty'. *MED* adds a third strand of a person in this state. As an adjective, the meaning is 'distressed, in want'.

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<sup>233</sup> So not in the Katherine Group, while *nowcin* is found only in the Katherine Group.

### *poure*

The first sense for the noun and adjective given by both the *OED* and the *MED* is of material poverty, and both include the possibly relative nature of the state<sup>234</sup>.

Additional sense components in the first half of the fourteenth century are:

'lacking, ill supplied' - *OED* 2a; *MED* 1b.

'small in amount, insufficient' - *OED* 4a; *MED* 5

'deficient in quality' - *OED* 5a;

'exciting pity' - *OED* 6; *MED* 6

as a noun - *OED* II; *MED* 2 (in phrases) and 3

The *MED* specifies in addition, 1d. 'voluntarily poor (the earliest illustration is from SW 290) and 1e. 'devoid of possessions at birth or death'.

### *pouerte*

Among the AB texts *pouerte* appears only in AW and Wohunge, as does *meoseise* (Wohunge *meseise*).

*MED* gives the source as: OF **povreté, poverté & povérte** AF **povért**

Senses that are current in the first half of the thirteenth century:

*MED*:

1. (a) 'Poverty, destitution; want, need; lack of sufficient money or goods'; (*OED* I. 1. a)

(b) ~ **and mischef (nede)**, 'poverty and need'; ~ **and wo, wo and ~**, 'poverty and sorrow'; **bringen to (in) ~, casten into ~**, 'to reduce (sb.) to poverty'; **descenden in ~, fallen in (into, to) ~**, 'fall or sink into poverty, become impoverished'; first citation is from AW

2. (a) 'Voluntary or deliberate poverty, as of Christ or a religious group; poverty as a

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<sup>234</sup> *OED*: 'In common use expressing various degrees, from absolute want to straitened circumstances or limited means relatively to station'; *MED*: 'also, less wealthy in comparison with somebody else'

Christian virtue'; first citation is from *AW*.

### *westi*

This is found once in *Hali Meiðhad* and twice in *Wohunge*.

The *MED* for *wasti* adj. gives its derivation from *wast(e* n.(1) which is AF/ONF **wast**, AF **vast**, vars. of OF **gast**; cp. ML **vastum**, **wastum**. The *OED* gives *wasty* from *waste* which it identifies as the same derivation.

The sense in *MED wasti* is of 'waste' as in 'wasteland', and the citation is HM 15/18. However, in *westi* adj. the *MED* gives the source as OE *wēstig* Cp *wasti* and gives the same citation from HM though a different MS. It gives sense (a) as 'Desolate, deserted' and an additional sense, sense (b) 'destitute' illustrated by the citation below about Christ from *Wohunge* 276/320. I cannot find *MED* sense (b) in the *OED* and neither seem to carry the sense of 'lacking' that I identify in the last section below.

I have put *westi* in the section from OFr but it may be that it could equally well sit in the OE section.

### Summary

While there are domains which would be expected to surround the concept and category poverty, there are some which are more surprising but which seem to crop up with some consistency. The areas of wickedness or evil, the connections with idleness and frivolity, and the concept of constraint are to be found in words which form part of the *TOE* category of poverty, as well as words which are outside that category but which move into the category in the eME period.



## Elements in the Frame

### Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the cultural and religious background surrounding poverty from the Anglo Saxon period to the early centuries after the Conquest and with how the poor and poverty appear in the context of the corpus I have studied in detail. I identify some elements, in so far as they can be perceived from this later perspective, in the extra-linguistic knowledge which informs the frames for the words in the category 'poverty' for this period in general and for my corpus in particular.

In the first part of the chapter I shall give an overview of the social, cultural and religious history, which provides some broad ideas about the concepts and referents of the poor and poverty in general for the Anglo-Saxon to the early Middle English period. In the second part of the chapter I shall look more closely at the issues that have emerged from specific texts through my examination of the 'poverty' words in context.

### The Poor

#### What is 'poverty'?

Constable comments that "The modern definition of poverty emerged in the 12th century when *paupertas* came to mean a lack of material resources rather than of power or social position, and when moral and legal thinkers began to address themselves to the social problem of indigency" (1996: 318). This is an important statement from the point of view of frames because it implies a significant shift in emphasis and meaning. A movement from a foreground of power to one of material means is mirrored in the word *rice* as is traced in Godden's 1990 study of the sense changes in the word *rice* as it shifted from a foreground of power to one of material wealth from late OE to eME. It also hints that there is an additional element in that

poverty becomes something that requires an organised social response. There may have been different elements foregrounded in the frame for Apollonius of Tyre in his assessment of his own shipwrecked situation, when he said he was *wædla* and *þearfa* than would have been foregrounded had he been shipwrecked in the Middle English period and said he was *wrecche* and *poure*. It is also significant for this particular study because Constable is suggesting a major shift in the concept expressed by the category at a time when its lexicalisation is undergoing observable instability, as can be seen in the replacement of the OE vocabulary with other OE words such as *wrecche* and subsequently with OFr *poure* and its forms. Mollat suggests that this remodelling is not confined to English at this period:

another equally valuable source of evidence concerning attitudes to poverty and the feelings it aroused is the vocabulary used to convey the diversity of its actual manifestations. The catalogue of terms used to describe poverty, many of them ambivalent, is notable for its variety and susceptibility to change. . . .diversification is evident in various vernacular forms that first appeared in the thirteenth century and multiplied in the fourteenth.

(Mollat 1986: 1)

If it is the case that in considering the meaning of words extra linguistic knowledge is as important as linguistic knowledge, then the question in diachronic semantics is how can we gain some sense of the extra linguistic knowledge that we need to read the texts and gain a sense of what the context is of the words in the poverty category.

The concept of slavery in the Anglo-Saxon period through to the eleventh century shows an interesting parallel to some of these issues surrounding the concept 'poverty' for the same period. For the PDE speaker the nineteenth century experience of the transportation of people from Africa to America and their subsequent exploitation is in the foreground of the frame for 'slave'. When Pelteret describes Anglo Saxon slaves



in England as able to marry free people, and adds that there was a condition that were a free man to marry a slave he was not allowed to desert her later - so protecting the slave's rights against the claims of the free spouse (1995: 103-4) this does not fit in to our frame for the word 'slave' and is a discontinuity with our PDE frame. Were we to be reading a text containing content about Anglo-Saxon slavery, much of our encyclopaedic knowledge would be very different from that of the author or contemporary reader. The idea that language makes us lose our sense of change when the same terms are used to designate realities that alter from one period to the next, is not a new idea and has been an ongoing concern for historians (Vauchez 1997: 313). In this example of slavery it is such a clear change in the concept that we are aware of it but I suggest that the changes in the frame for 'poverty' can be so subtle, and so relative, that the words and references may conceal rather than reveal them.

Similarly the concept 'hospital' is misleading for the medieval period in that it has changed its sense in PDE. It could describe a place that provided medical care but also describe almshouses or settlement homes for the aged and destitute and centres for charitable activity (Tierney 1959).

The concept 'poverty' once contained a strong component of 'powerlessness', as Bosl observed of the Carolingian period, when he identified *pauper* and *potens* as antonyms and that to be a *pauper* was to be a dependent impotent. *Pauper* status was only partly economic and *paupertas* could be a way of life and church alms the normal means of existence within a gift economy (Burns 1988: 626). Lepers are another group of people who lack power and privilege and Peyroux suggests that the common everyday terms for lepers, *misellus* and *Lazar*, refer not to the disease per se but to conditions of poverty (2000: 170).



### **The poor are always with us**

The poor may be always with us but the definition of who they are has never been simple. In current discussion about the poor, economic factors alone do not appear to be sufficient criteria for the definition of poverty, and not only material want but also social status are considered to be factors (Geremek 1994: 3). On the other hand, despite their low social status slaves were never included in Roman or Cappadocian concepts of the poor. This may have been because they were guaranteed food and clothing through their status as possessions (Holman 2001: 40). There appears to have been a long standing acceptance by many societies that poverty is a relative state, and in the Medieval period this meant that the 'poor' who merited charity included people who met with difficulties living up to their social group (Farmer 2002: 85 citing Trexler).

When the medieval poor appear in literature or records they often occupy the same role that they occupy when they appear in wills, as the recipient of the charity of others. Much of the research into medieval poverty, by Le Goff, Duby, Mollat and Pullan among others, has had its main focus on continental Europe and has drawn extensively on charitable arrangements. Provision for the relief of the poor has been relatively well documented in continental Europe but much of their evidence also seems relevant to medieval England, particularly in view of the close economic and ecclesiastical ties that existed between the two as noted by Campbell (1991: 107 et al.). The medieval church played a large part in the relief of the poor, but also in the complex and ambivalent attitudes that there seem to have been to the state of poverty and to those who lived in it. Indeed issues concerning poverty and wealth were troublesome for the church throughout the medieval period, as will be seen later, as well as beyond.

There appears to have been a large variation in the circumstances of the poor. They were linked by their material lack, but differed in the processes through which they arrived in poverty and the courses of action that they took in order to cope with it.

Through bequests in wills, particularly from the twelfth century which seems to have seen the beginning of an upsurge in lay benevolence, it is possible to see some of the circumstances of those who were left alms as, according to Mollat, their concern for salvation led donors to designate specific categories of recipients: paupers begging their daily bread, marriageable girls without dowries, lepers and captives (Mollat 1986: 95-6)

### **The dependent poor**

Local people who fell on hard times, or who were unable to work through age or disability were often helped by neighbours. Allowances for the marriage of poor women seem to have been frequent throughout the middle ages. Some people suffered in other ways through a lack of economic support from their families. Widows and orphans may have been left with lands and property, but some widows were left without a source of income and Hanawalt suggests that they relied on charity to see them through, hoping for occasional work and begging for their bread and housing. If they had young children, she says, their reliance on the generosity of their neighbours would be very great indeed (1988: 225).

Such personal charity makes it difficult to assess the situation of those poor who receive it. It is possible that much of the assistance that women in this position received may have been informal, as Hanawalt suggests above, where friends and neighbours provided and in that case little evidence would be recorded. In her study of poverty in medieval Paris, Farmer finds qualitative differences in charitable giving between the elite and the non elite. Both are more reluctant to help disabled boys and men than women and girls, but the elite largely give alms to institutions, while the non elite are more likely to give sustained personal support through housing and daily assistance. She suggests that the non elite might have more empathy as they could see the possibility that they themselves might be in need of such help in the future (2002: 104). Cullum makes the pertinent point that women were more likely than men to



make charitable bequests in their wills, but often on a small scale and to people known to them. In this case it can be difficult to extract bequests which were for reasons of relief of poverty, as they were bequests by name, and not with a description such as 'pauper' or 'widow' (1997: 204).

Considering how many widows there must have been, they appear to figure very little in documents. In his book on slavery Pelteret comments on the entry in the Domesday Book for Badsey, an estate belonging to the church of Evesham, that records "There are four slaves there and one widow". He comments that she is the only widow mentioned in the county, and sees the collocation of her with the slaves as suggesting that the lot of a poor woman could resemble that of a slave (1995: 216). There is evidence through wills that husbands sometimes attempted to make provision for their aged wives, often by leaving property to a son on the condition that he care for his mother during her lifetime (Hanawalt 1988: 234), but old age, as well as physical disability or illness could lead to great hardship. Hospitals and almshouses existed and Mollat tells us that the number of such charitable institutions increased considerably from the twelfth century (1986: 98). Provision for those suffering from leprosy was particularly affected by the ambivalent feelings that surrounded those who were physically ailing.

### **The working poor**

Some people were working and yet still were poor. The poor often accepted work in the most despised trades, tanning, dyeing and clothmaking. It was also in the twelfth century, some time before 1173, that the spinners of Provins voiced a prophetic complaint that has been preserved by Chretien de Troyes in *Le Chevalier au Lion*: "We shall always be poor, we shall ever be hungry and thirsty . . . . . Our employer grows wealthy on our earnings" (Mollat 1985: 69).

People who were living at, or close to, subsistence were susceptible to broader



economic crises and their social consequences. People could be reduced to begging by reason of war, or crop failure and then be unable to find employment when so many people were looking for work in hard times. It appears that subsistence farming often had to be supplemented by outside wage earning and it is estimated that in 1300 one half of all peasant households in England survived thanks to outside wages earned by the family head (Mollat 1986: 168). In times of general economic hardship those close to the edge of poverty were pushed over, at a time when competition for the relief that there was, was at its most intense.

The actions people took to cope with their situation varied. Pelteret notes that, until roughly the period just after the Domesday Survey, voluntary slavery could provide relief. He quotes the manumission of a group of people by a woman in Durham in the eleventh century, they were described as people 'whose heads she took in exchange for food in those evil days' (1995: 162). Slaves were provided for materially by their owners and Pelteret says that poverty and debt must not be underestimated as causes of enslavement, even though war tends to be emphasised in the sources, and he cites an instance in which King Alfred, in his will, frees slaves who appear to have become enslaved to him in exchange for the discharge of their debts, either financial or in kind (1995: 111). It was also possible for parents to sell their children into slavery, although the child's consent was required after they turned seven (Pelteret 1995: 103).

### **The vagrant poor**

Some people relied on their local community, but others either chose, or were forced, to leave. As far as it is possible to tell, these people seem to have been regarded as the more threatening group. There seem to have been two types of poor, on the one hand those who continued to live in the circle of their family or community and were supported by them, and, on the other, the vagrant poor. There seems to be general agreement in the current literature that the position of those who left their community

was very different to that of those who stayed. Along with the sick and disabled, the prisoners of war and widows and orphans, the poorest of the poor were the rootless vagabonds who were driven from the land by scarcity, epidemic, and debt, by the weight of their burdens and the inadequacy of their harvests (Mollat 1986: 29).

The lack of familiarity with the poor who moved from place to place seems to have brought suspicion. Some people had moved to the growing towns, but Mollet suggests that the number of urban poor was probably still relatively small in the twelfth century and the urban poor were not viewed with as much suspicion as the outlaws roaming the forest (1986: 68). These were among the people who turned up at the mass alms givings at monastery gates, and who begged at the doors of the rich, and who were *miserabiles personæ*.

## The Poor and Christianity

There were many ambivalent strands in the relationship between the poor and Christianity. Ambivalence had been evident from early in the history of Christianity. Geremek notes that an ambivalent attitude toward beggars and poverty ranging from disapproval of their way of life to praise of the virtue of renunciation can be traced as early as the writings of the Fathers of the Church (1997: 368).

Shades of the later medieval and early modern, as well as contemporary, discrimination between the deserving and the undeserving poor were present in Gregory the Great's distinction between 'public beggars' and 'modest paupers', which led him to give more to the latter (Dyer 1994: 237). Bosworth in the Anglo-Saxon Dictionary notes in the entry for *pearfa* that the Church, as well as advocating almsgiving, also assigned a proportion of its tithes to the relief of the poor, who were called *Godes pearfan*. The division of alms was described, in the Laws of King Ethelred, as quoted by Bosworth:



Be teoðunge. Se cyng and his witan habbaþ gecoren and gecweden ealswa hit riht is - ðæt þridða [Ms. þriddan] dæl ðare teoðunge ðe to cirican gebyrige ga to ciric-bote:- and oðer dæl ðam Godes þeowum;- þridde Godes þearfum, and earman þeowetlingan

The king and his witan have chosen and decreed, as is just- that a third part of the tithe, which belongs to the Church, go to church-repair:- and a second part to the servants of God:- a third to God's poor, and the needy in thraldom.

Bosworth Toller

Bosworth goes on to say that the poor also derived benefit from certain fines:

Gebete he .xxx. scill and sie ðæt feoh gedæled ðæm þearfum, ðe on ða[m] tun[e] synd

He was to be charged thirty shillings and that money was to be given to the poor who were in that town.

*Laws of King Athelstan* quoted in Bosworth Toller.

Later in the period, between 1269 and 1270, the Cistercian monastery of Beaulieu in Hampshire compiled an account book. It gave guidelines for the assistance to be offered to the poor. These are detailed by Dyer - among other things, three days each week left-over bread is to be distributed, and at harvest time, when work was plentiful, alms were not to be given except to pilgrims, old people, children and those incapable of work. Only in times of great famine were women suspected of being prostitutes to be given alms. The number of paupers to be maintained by the porter and guest house was set at thirteen, the number at the Last Supper, after which preference was to be given to aristocratic visitors. In the lay infirmary the meat of animals that had died of



disease was to be fed to the sick. Dyer comments that the attention to economy, the discrimination and the distrust of the poor would not have been out of place among the zealous administrators of the new Poor Law in the nineteenth century (1994: 237).

Wealth itself had always been a moral problem, not least the wealth of the church itself. The wealth of the church and its individual institutions contrasted with the poverty of some of its individual members. Monastic life in Anglo-Saxon England has recently been the subject of much research and discussion, and Leyser says that it has become increasingly clear that monasteries were founded not as retreats from the world, but as a means of both Christianising and ruling it. The glories of their buildings proclaimed the might of their founders and the majesty of the new God. Bede's own monastery of Jarrow was built with all the most up-to-date splendour (1996: 24). This contrasted with the self-imposed privations of many of the individuals who gave spiritual leadership. Æðelðryð founded the monastery of Ely, and, Leyser continues, lived there with perfect humility and in great austerity, never wearing linen and strictly rationing her hot baths, until her death seven years later.

On the other hand, without wealth it would not have been possible to provide alms and charity to the poor, and as Dyer says, there was a mutual social contract between rich and poor in which the rich were morally improved, and the poor, if they accepted their lot with patience and resignation, would also gain salvation (1994: 236). In return the poor were expected to intercede on behalf of the people whose alms they received. The poor could be seen as 'porters' who carry the wealth of the rich from earth to heaven so that the rich can enter (Holman 2001: 20).

Assistance to the poor and sick was seen as a saintly virtue. Bede, in his lives of Saint Oswald and Saint Cuthbert, clearly brought out their work with the afflicted. Corbett says the possessed served as sensitive and infallible indicators of the presence of the Holy, for whenever a genuine Holy man was present, in person or vicariously through his relics, the demons were invariably expelled from the possessed. The poor and needy became the retainers of the Holy patron, his retinue, the visible measure of

his social importance. The sick required his special intercession (*auxilium*) if they were to be cured (1986).

Cuthbert, and other holy men, sought out a life of poverty and privation for their bodies to further the salvation of their souls. Hermits voluntarily embraced the sufferings that the desperately poor endured, and the tensions between the pleasures and trappings of this world and the need to suffer in order to concentrate on the next, provided a constant source of strain and debate. In the eleventh and early twelfth centuries there was an increase in the number of hermits, and Mollat comments that in England, where hermits seem to have been particularly long lived, Godric of Finchal died in 1170 after more than seventy years of strenuous hermetic life (1986: 75-6).

A dilemma lay in whether poverty was a virtue in itself, or a means to perfection, and from the thirteenth century some Benedictines were arguing for the latter, and the Franciscans for the former. Vauchez notes that to 'follow naked the naked Christ' which was the motto that inspired itinerant preachers, meant living in privation and asceticism and giving oneself to the service of the poor and of lepers and to the rehabilitation of prostitutes. The voluntary poor found themselves extolled (Vauchez 1997: 325).

## **The Poor and the Social Order**

There is a great deal of secondary literature on the hierarchy and jigsaw of the various groups in Anglo-Saxon and Medieval society, and discussion about whether the poor did themselves constitute a social order. There seems to be no consensus and even among contemporary writers the descriptions of the social orders seem to take as many forms as there are writers describing them.

In the Anglo Saxon period there were implications, for those who were deficient in material goods, of a justice system in which financial compensation for offences seems to have been of prime importance. In 574 Chilperic's edict defined malefactors



as bad persons who commit bad deeds, who have no fixed abode, *who possess nothing that could be confiscated for their wrongdoings* and who roam the woods (my italics). Geremek goes on to note that in Charlemagne's capitularies there often appears to be mistrust and hostility towards vagabonds and wanderers, which even extends to pilgrims (1997: 351). The idea that there exist a group of people who are outside the range of economic sanctions is interesting as it appears to have the implication that they are somehow outside the law. In Anglo-Saxon England economic sanctions appear to have been delineated with great attention to detail, and Professor Wallace-Hadrill queried why Aethelberht (King of Kent) and his continental contemporaries devote the bulk of their legislation to detailed and lengthy tariffs of compensation for personal injury and loss or damage of personal property (Hodges 1986: 58).

Hodges goes on to trace from about 600 onwards a shift from what he describes as "egalitarian settlement structure" to a situation of greater individuality, where in place of traditional economic values, the Church fostered the right to accumulate wealth to personal and household advantage. He suggests that the need, in times of rapid social change, to restrict the uncontrolled flow of wealth leads to rules to restrict the means of achieving political power and to perpetuate a ranking system (1986: 70). It would be difficult to see where the very poor could fit into a ranking system of social control and accountability based to a large extent on economic value and penalty, while, if it is an accurate reflection of the shift in wealth possession, the move to individual access to material benefits would also marginalise the poor. In an interesting archaeological detail, he says that the construction of fences around the farms, as well as the shuffling of the settlement pattern in the mid Saxon period, confirms the historical impression that property was no longer considered in tribal terms but designated as belonging to individuals (1989: 191).

In Moore's analysis of what he describes as the growth of a 'persecuting society' he suggests that the effect of the use of money becoming more general meant that the poor themselves - that is the involuntary poor - were starkly defined by the lack of it,



and became the focus of growing anxieties to those in authority (1987:98).

The poor and sick could easily find themselves outside the social group, particularly if they moved away from their community, even while some provision might be made for them. The vagabond and the beggar were not synonymous, as an additional component in vagabond is that of travelling around. The group of people suffering from leprosy were provided with accommodation and alms, but even while they remained settled, their disease made them objects of fear. Charity toward the sick went hand in hand with fear of contagion and with aversion and contempt for the crippled (Geremek 1997: 367).

Despite these deeply ambivalent attitudes to the poor and their state, people did provide relief for the needy, initially largely through the church or its promptings. As the twelfth century passed provision through lay organisations increased, while over the same period growing hostility to the sturdy beggars in literature appears, for example in *Piers Plowman*. Distinction should be made between organised provision and that provided informally by charitable neighbours and friends, even though this is the most difficult form of provision to find in the evidence. Dyer says that the survival of the medieval poor still remains something of a mystery, and given the inadequacy of charitable institutions, the network of relatives and neighbours must be assumed to have worked with some effect (1994: 257).

In looking forward to the legislation of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which moved towards local responsibility for poor relief, Dyer comments that the assumption on the part of the legislator that the poor should be relieved or controlled by their local communities was presumably not an innovation imposed from above, but a comment on existing social practice (1994: 252).

During this period there seems to have been a move towards an increasing involvement of the laity with direct and organised provision of relief for the poor. On the other hand, in 1196 William Longbeard who led a brief uprising, claimed to speak for the poor:

I am the saviour of the poor . . . . You, the poor, who know the hard hands  
of the rich man . . . . For the day is coming when you shall be visited. I  
will divide the humble and faithful from the proud and perfidious. I will divide  
the elect from the damned as the light from the darkness (Mollat 1986: 84).

This strong tone of resentment towards the rich as a group has moral overtones,  
and while this was an appeal for support, it seems to contain echoes of the ideas of the  
virtues of poverty which were involved in the founding of the Franciscans in 1209,  
and the appeal to the masses of the itinerant mendicant preachers who caused such  
anxiety among the church hierarchy and which Moore describes as a factor in the rise  
of what he calls 'a persecuting society' (1987).

## **Voluntary Poverty**

The concept of poverty in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries is complicated  
by the effects of the religious movements of the eleventh and twelfth century which  
lay great stress on the poverty of Christ on earth and on the concept of Christian  
voluntary poverty. While this had been an element in Christianity from the beginning,  
the poverty of Christ and the imitation of that by Christians on earth was brought more  
strongly into the foreground during this time. The leaders of the reform movement  
stressed common life and manual labour, owing to their concern for poverty and  
simplicity. They wanted to be poor and naked following the poor and naked Christ.  
This meant being stripped and exposed as well as poor and without clothes and the  
precepts *nudus Nudum* and *pauper Pauperum* were taken literally, as when the Abbot  
of Crépin went barefoot to Rome . . . and Pontius of Léras came to Lodève 'naked and  
unshod' (Constable 1996: 146-7; 319).

There is an increasing preoccupation with economic poverty and the dangers of



wealth and avarice in Christian writing. Gerhoh of Reichersberg (an Augustinian monastery) wrote in 1167 *'On the fourth nightwatch'* in which he outlined the four ages of the Christian church and the help God had sent in each. In the persecution he sent the martyrs, in the heresies he sent the confessors, in the corruption of morals he sent the Holy Fathers and in the age of avarice he sent the voluntary poor.

A dilemma lay in whether poverty was a virtue in itself, or a means to perfection, and from the thirteenth century some Benedictines were arguing for the latter, and the Franciscans for the former. Vauchez notes that to 'follow naked the naked Christ' which was the motto that inspired itinerant preachers, meant living in privation and asceticism and giving oneself to the service of the poor and of lepers and to the rehabilitation of prostitutes. The stories of holy men healing lepers in the fourth to sixth centuries depict wonder working saints making a potent cure but similar stories of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries emphasize the holy humility of the saints and depict the embrace of the leper as an occasion for self immolation (Peyroux 2000: 185).

The voluntary poor found themselves extolled (Vauchez 1997: 325). For some Christians voluntary poverty was not necessarily concerned with lack of material possession, but more with the desire to be spiritually poor as expressed in Matthew's version of the beatitude 'blessed are the poor in spirit' rather than Luke's 'blessed are the poor'. It was the desire to renounce material wealth that brought grace, so the fact of being one of the economically poor, of being involuntarily poor, did not of itself bring grace and the poor could be guilty of wishing to be wealthy. As Girsch notes of slavery, a concept which has no positive realm in the real world acquires a positive realm in Christian imagery and this is equally true of poverty (Girsch 1994).



## Poverty in Context

In this section I shall examine the relationship between the words and their context in the texts that I have studied in detail, *The Peterborough Chronicle*, *The Ormulum*, Lazamon's *Brut* and the AB Texts. This draws on the context of the vocabulary of poverty and the poor in my corpus and on discussion from secondary literature. This is to gain a sense of the elements that the words contain in context, in order to identify the attributes and values that are in the frames of this category in these instances.

Words that are in the category through collocation are included here and they bring peripheral senses which are also included.

### How 'real' are the referents?

While the materially poor appear in these texts, particularly in *AW*, the picture is complicated by the dimension of voluntary, or spiritual, poverty which is expressed by the same vocabulary. The anchoresses in *AW* are imitating Christ's life on earth and refer to themselves as part of *godes poure*. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, however, from her examination of the text, determines that their living conditions are not those that we would define as poor. Their anchor hold had at least three cells, a parlour, perhaps some kind of yard or garden, probably a servants' room. They also had two kinds of servants, indoor and outdoor (2001). The anchoresses are clearly not living in conditions that in present day England would be defined as poverty. The central issue for *godes poure* seems to be that they are dependent for their needs on others, in accord with Bonaventure's definition of poverty as living by what was not one's own (*Apologia Pauperum* 1269). In this sense they are a clear example of the complications that develop in the concept, when the idea of material poverty is extended by the idea of spiritual poverty and yet both are expressed by the same lexical items.

### **The economic background and the position of the poor**

The economic shift from a gift to a cash economy came about among many changes for the individual. There is a view in the secondary literature that religious movements reflect the preoccupations of their time. The preoccupation with power and violence before the eleventh and twelfth centuries gave way to a preoccupation with money and wealth, and the religious concern with voluntary poverty reflected that (Little 1978). Poor relief for the involuntary poor does not seem to have been concerned with altering their condition but served a religious function for the donor.<sup>235</sup> 'The poor were approached as the weakest members of society, and through their misery great prizes were to be won.' (Rubin 1987: 250)

The issue of the deserving and undeserving poor was not new and was present in the early days of the church. Medieval monastic charity has been seen as indiscriminating as indeed the distribution at the monastery gates at funerals or feast days was. However Tierney sees discrimination as an element in poor relief that was discussed more than any other. He suggests that discrimination was a factor in monastic poor relief in the twelfth century and that it bridges the gap between the early discussion of discrimination and its perceived arrival in codes of practice. He considers that the thirteenth century, with parish relief, monastic doles and the growth of endowed hospitals and almshouses provided a situation through which the poor were better looked after in England than in any subsequent century until the present (Tierney 1959: 109).

Ambivalence to the poor arises early, and is inherent in the judgement that some may be undeserving. Institutional action that reflects this seems to be later, although not always as late as the period after the labour shortages following the Black Death as, for example, Louis IX in the thirteenth century attacked idle vagrants with legislation. Hostility to the poor grows through this period. There was a relationship between the social changes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the groups who

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<sup>235</sup> Rubin, Little, Tierney among others.



came to be the targets of persecution, such as the people who claimed to be *pauperes christi* but 'of whom the possibility seemed to be that they were someone else's poor' (Moore 1987: 103). The *pauper* moved from being a powerless object of charity to someone spiritually powerful, unattached to material goods, the *imitatio christi*. Even so humility remains an important element in voluntary and involuntary poverty. Jaques of Vitry tells the story of the *pauper humilis* who receives more alms than the *pauper superbus*. For the Franciscans poverty was a manifestation of humility just as obedience was (Burr 2001).

## **Material poverty and alms**

### **Almsgiving**

From early in its history the poor were an important part of the institutional life of the Christian Church, both as symbols and as the recipients of alms. In the AB texts there are warnings about the fate of those who do not give to the poor, for example AW 111 58a/8. In the *Ormulum* the discussion about alms focuses on the donor and the reward they can acquire by their gifts rather than the poor who receive them.

Harvey in her study of Westminster Abbey identifies the groups of people who received alms as: poor travellers, often pilgrims; the beggars, the 'naked poor' dependent on alms for their living; the poor in institutions; the poor and sick of the district. The materially poor who appear in these texts are the beggars and the local poor (1995).

### **The 'naked poor'**

In both the *Ormulum* and the AB texts these people are often referred to in general. Particularly in the *Ormulum* the emphasis is not on their condition, but rather on the spiritual reward that the Christian can get through giving alms to them. The *Ormulum* refers to the need to clothe the *nakedd* poor (i 213/61647) but also has some reference



to the individual poor, in the story of the Christian who has two cloaks and should give one to the poor man - the *usell wrecche* (i 353/10140).

It is interesting in the *Ormulum* that the people who are in material need, whom the Christian should help, are referred to as *þe wake leod* (i 354/10162) and *wake* here is given the sense 'poor' in the glossary. Although *wac/wake* was identified as part of the category for the AB texts, it was not used there directly to mean 'poor' and it is present through collocation, which reinforces that this concept 'weak', while not present in the foreground for the AB texts, is part of the frame and is foregrounded in this instance in the *Ormulum* as one element in the condition of those in need. It brings to mind the *miserabiles personæ* who are in need of help and protection.

These poor, the recipients of alms, are called the *neodfule* in *AW* (111 58a/8) and in *St K.* are referred to as *i neodfule ant i nakede* (*St K.* 1v/34). In the reference in *St K.* the poor are a backdrop, used to establish her credentials and they appear in much the same light as the retinues of the poor and sick who accompany other saints. This is a generic reference but in *AW* the references are more specific. There is reference to those who arrive as a group at the door - the 'naked' poor but they are not seen in *AW* as a threat, more as a nuisance because of the possibility of *hare meadlese nurð* 'their immoderate noise' (*AW* 211 111b/26). Here they are named as *uncuð hearloz* 'unknown down-and-outs' (White's translation). That they are unknown implies that these are not the local poor, rather those who travel asking for alms<sup>236</sup>.

The most negative portrait of one of the 'naked poor' in the AB texts is of a *cointe hearlot* attempting to deceive an alms giver through a display of cosmetic poverty in *AW* 168 89a/26. Here the adjective *cointe* forms a strongly negative statement<sup>237</sup> and

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<sup>236</sup> There appears to be the element of vagrancy in the use of *hearlot* and vagrancy involving attendance at mass almsgivings may involve a large group of people. Harvey (1995) and Farmer (2002), writing of England and France respectively, estimate the numbers attending charitable disbursements could reach well into the thousands, even above twenty thousand on some occasions.

<sup>237</sup> it is used in *AW* only twice more, once of the devil (80a/13) and once of the low flesh trying to master the soul (38b/13).

this seems to reflect contemporary issues about those who cosmetically alter goods, including, as prostitutes and beggars do, their bodies to deceive in the market place. In *AW* 182 96b/19 *hearlot* is also used as a description of Christ and, in imitation of him, the anchoresses begging shamefully for a living on earth. Here the imagery shows the paradox of the voluntary and involuntary axis, as that which is weak and shameful, even wicked, when part of involuntary poverty, is transformed into something powerful and glorious spiritually when part of voluntary poverty.

### **The local poor**

There are many routes through which people came to poverty, and in the *Peterborough Chronicle* civil conflict results in those who had been rich being reduced to living on alms, while poor men starved from hunger (1137). There is considerable material hardship for the people and the words used to describe this are *wrecce* and *ærme*.

In the *Peterborough Chronicle* there is, in the annal for 675, an Interpolation based on a Bull of Pope Agatho granting privileges to the Abbey such that a vow to travel to Rome can be fulfilled by travel to Peterborough if the man is unable to travel through *haueleste* - poverty. This is the only instance of *haueleste* and may be influenced by a translation from Latin but in the *Poema Morale* it was seen that the instance of *haueleste* there was in a passage which discussed voluntary and involuntary poverty, and this word was clearly of the material or involuntary state.

The local poor appear in *AW* only as the possible recipients of the anchoresses' charity. Much is made of the inherent spiritual dangers for the anchoresses if they give charity. They are not to behave like Martha, as they are beggars themselves and so should not use their alms for others (*AW* 112a/2). All the instances use the word *poure* to describe these local poor.

The poor as recipients of alms, both local poor and the 'naked poor', are present in



Lazamon's *Brut*. but their function in the *Brut* is very different. Here they provide a cover for treachery. This is ironic as in the AB texts and the *Ormulum*, as has been noted above, the poor are not present with any concern at their condition but rather as a channel through which the rich might attain salvation. In the *Brut* the good treatment of the poor is put forward as one of the measures of kingship. When the poisoned Aurelian speaks of Uther, who will succeed him, he asks God to make him a good king, and the attributes include *wærcche uolke for fæder, hænen to frouere* - a father to the poor, and a protector to the abject. Looking after all the people, rich and poor, comes into this but in two instances it is the king's generosity specifically to the poor through alms at his court, that gives his enemies the opportunity to get close to him for treachery.

The Saxons send spies to see how Uther might be killed. They disguise themselves in *almes-monnes wisen* (C 9800) or *pore men gyuse* (O 9800) and mingle with the *wrecchan* (9804 C *wracchen*) gathering for alms from the king. Collocated with *aelmes-monnes wisen* (*pore men gyuse*) is *vn-hale* and *wracchen* so the poor and the sick are here. This same opportunity is exploited later by Brien when he wants to kill Pelluz. This passage is missing in O. On this occasion it is stated that the king arranges for all the poor who lived in the town to be fed and they are numbered in the thousands. They are described as the *blæðe* (C 15358). Brien has disguised himself as a pilgrim, which enables him to carry a staff and presumably to join the poor. He is in tattered clothes and appears lame. When his sister sees him he appears to her *on wræcches monnes liche* (15374) and when she gives him gold she calls him *wrecche*. They sit between two widows (15384-5), so pilgrims, the lame, the tattered and widows are among those present in the group. There is no sense here, or in the poor gathering for alms from Uther, that the group is a threat. Indeed the threat comes from the one who is disguised as poor.

While battle in the *Brut* has disastrous consequences for the defeated, and sometimes for the people in general, there are instances of the opportunities that it can



provide for the poor to become wealthy. Sometimes this comes from the general enrichment of the kingdom, when Arthur returns from his conquest of Jutland and there was no Briton so *wrecche* that he was not enriched (11338). Arthur, planning to conquer France, predicts that every *neod-fol* man will benefit (O 11848 C has *ærmēn*). Brutus' followers gain wealth from booty as he had no follower so *wrecche* that he did not have gold and fine clothes (650).

### **Inadequate/poor with a financial component**

*Wac* and *eðelich* are both used in the AB texts to mean 'inadequate' in a financial context. In *HM* *wac* is used of the poor wages the world pays, as opposed to spiritual reward (3/8), and of the marriage settlement of the poor (4/16). In *Ureisun* 2/31 *wac* is used of an article that is bought too dearly. *Eðelich* is used in the context of selling a soul cheaply, *eðeliche*, to the devil (AW 79b/2). While *poure* is not used in this sense it is used of the brides of Christ, and the bride's dowry is discussed in this context.

### **Christ on earth and the imitation of Christ**

Generally the involuntary poor are present in texts as the recipients of someone else's actions, through charity and assistance. In contrast the voluntary poor take centre stage as agents. Christ is the model for voluntary poverty. The anchoresses are imitating his life on earth; the martyr saints are imitating his sacrifice; the speakers in the Wooing group are identifying with him. Christians should emulate his poverty and humility. The imitation of Christ was not a new idea in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but it grew in importance and, Constable observes, took on a degree of literalism that would have surprised and perhaps shocked the earlier church (1995: 169-70).

The vocabulary and the images used of Christ on earth and his imitation draw on the concept and language of involuntary poverty.

## The anchoresses

The anchoresses are equated with *godes poure* and their condition is described as *meoseise* (eg. AW 71b/10) or as *wone* (eg. AW 71b/4/6). The anchorhold is a place of deprivation, with *pine 7 wone ant alle meoseises* 'pain and want and all discomforts' (AW 31a/28). Christ's experience is an encouragement '*Per in anli stude him hungrede* 'there in that solitary place he hungered' (AW 43b/25). Not only did Christ hunger, but on earth he was confined. The anchoresses are in *godes prisun* 'god's prison' (AW 28b/15). *Nearones* is used of Christ's life on earth and, by association, of the anchoress' life. These instances<sup>238</sup> do not appear, in our definition of the term, to be associated with 'material poverty'<sup>239</sup>. They describe the confinement of Christ - in Mary's womb, in the cradle, and in the place of his birth.<sup>240</sup> This is a common concept in the eME period, concerning the narrowness of the places in which Christ's body was laid, and there were generally four - the virgin's womb, the cradle, the gallows of the cross and the tomb.<sup>241</sup> In the passage in AW in which Christ's poverty on earth is used against covetousness all the places Christ was laid are described as *nearow*. His birth in a cramped place is presented as one of the signs of his poverty, in the definition employed in this context. His greatest poverty is said to be on the cross, which is: *brad as scheld buuen*.<sup>^</sup> . . . *nearow bineoðen* 'wide at the top like a shield . . . narrow at the bottom' (AW 106a/2). At first sight this seems to be a simple physical deescription, but the sense of this passage relies on constructing Christ's poverty through the places he has laid his body. The cross is part of his poverty in that he had such a small space as its foot took up to rest himself. This was his housing, reflecting the form of alms as to house the poor. The anchoresses mirror Christ's poverty at the crucifixion.

The description of Christ's poverty at the crucifixion is one of those passages in which the dislocation between the PDE frame of poverty and the eME frame is in

<sup>238</sup> AW 102a/26, 28; 102b/3 of Mary's womb and Christ's cradle.

<sup>239</sup> *Nearones* appears once in TOE category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** in **.Want of money**.

<sup>240</sup> *Nearones* in TOE category **05.10.02 Narrowness, scantiness of space**.

<sup>241</sup> Shepherd (1991) note on 16/27 eg. Adam the Scot PL 198 col. 471



sharp relief. While Christ's poverty on earth is part of the current concept of Christ, his suffering on the cross would not be described by a twenty first century speaker of English as an example of poverty.

### **The martyrs**

In the AB texts the martyrs mirror Christ's suffering at the crucifixion. *Nowcin* is often used of their state both about them and by them. An important element of their torment is that they are stripped naked, reflecting the image of Christ stripped naked and bound to the pillar. This is a common element in female saints' lives throughout the medieval period. There is much discussion in the secondary literature of the disrobing of female saints and the reduction of their saintliness to a passive, but willing, suffering of bodily torments. In the AB texts this is also true of Christ, and while their nakedness may have many elements, including powerlessness and rape, or the threat of rape, it also brings material poverty to mind about Christ in the passage from *AW*<sup>242</sup>, as another embodiment of alms was to clothe the naked poor.

### **Christ**

The poverty of Christ's birth is heavily stressed in the AB texts, as above where the anchoresses are imitating Christ's confinement in the narrow crib. This is also found in the *Ormulum* where the same connection between his close confinement and his poverty occurs as Christ was laid in a *naru cribbe* contrasting with the spaciousness of the kingdom of heaven *heoffness rume riche* which he gives us (i 127/3687). Christ as a baby in his crib is described in the *Ormulum* as *unnorne 7 wrecche 7 usell child In ure mennisscnesse* in which his poverty is also allied to his assumption of our humanity (i 126/3668). *Wrecche* is used four times in the *Ormulum* about Christ at his birth, three of these refer to his clothing, the swaddling clothes he was wrapped in *wrecche winndeclutes* (i 126/3675).

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<sup>242</sup> See appendix



*Poure* and *pouerte* are used of Christ in the AB texts. All the instances of *poure* that apply to Christ are in *AW* or *Wohunge*<sup>243</sup>. One of the instances in *AW*, however, uses *poure* in the sense 'lacking in' as Christ is *poure* of an inn (*AW* 71a/2). At the climax of a passage in *AW* on Christ's life, in which he becomes poorer and poorer through his life, the culmination of his poverty is his poverty at the crucifixion:

ah alre meast pouerte com 3et her efter. For steort naket he wes  
despuillet o þe rode  
But the greatest poverty of all came after this again: for he was  
stripped stark naked on the cross

*AW* 133 71a/10

This passage expresses all Christ's earthly sufferings through the image of his poverty. Its framework is Christ's lack of food, clothing and lodging through his life but which is greatest in the crucifixion. This idea is expressed in *Wohunge* too: *swa þu eldere wex swa þu pouere was* 'as you grew older you became poorer' (*Wohunge* 330). It is only in *AW* though that the framework of alms is so consistently constructed as the expression of the voluntary poverty of Christ.

The word *wrecche* has connotations of the flesh, sin, hell and devils in eME texts. However it is also used of Christ, although in the AB texts only in the Wooing Group, as *westi 7 wrecched* 'destitute and wretched' (*Wohunge* 319) and in *Ureisun makedest te her wrecche for us wreches* 'made yourself here wretched for us wretches' (*Ureisun* 56). It is used in the *Ormulum* as one of the main words to express Christ's poverty on earth, often collocating with *usell* and *unnorne*. Christ here has taken on the flesh, of which the word *wreche* is often used. Indeed, in the *Ormulum* Christ is brought down, figuratively and literally, by taking on human flesh as he is *Nippredd 7 wannsedd*

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<sup>243</sup> As are all of the instances of *pouerte* which are all applied to Christ.

*wunnderrliz* 'lowered and lessened' (i 128/3730).

### **Christian voluntary poverty**

As noted of the anchoresses, voluntary poverty put them among *godes poure*. In the *Ormulum* much is made of the need to follow Christ's example of humility and poverty in order to gain heavenly bliss. Prophets and Holy Men in the wilderness wear clothes, and take food and drink, that is *unnorne* where *unnorne* is plain and not luxurious (i 272/7854). Christians generally are exhorted to emulate Christ and become *wrecche 7 wædle 7 usell mann* (i 195/5638) which is difficult to translate in that while *wædle* has little connotation outside its sense 'poverty', *wrecche* comes with many additional senses, concerned with low status and things to do with the flesh.

### **Earthly suffering**

As Bately observed, the AB texts, and the Katherine Group in particular, have a wide range of words for 'suffering' and 'pain' (1998). Words from the AB poverty vocabulary form a small part of this and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish meaning which includes a sense of 'poverty' instead of more generalised suffering. This is generally true of all the texts which contain content about misery and suffering. The *Peterborough Chronicle*, in its Continuations, contains much material about the suffering of rich and poor during Stephen's reign in which the words *wrecche* and *earme* are prominent, but it is difficult to separate the strands concerned with misery, suffering and poverty. There are times when the suffering is emotional fear, as in the annal for 793 when people are afraid of the portents and what they signify and again the word used is *earme*.



### **Suffering with a poverty component**

Sometimes the context makes it clear that poverty is a component in the suffering, and in the AB texts *wone* is used several times in this sense, for example in *Lofsong of Ure lauerd* (12). This suffering is seen as part of the testing of Christians on earth. It is tempting to assume that there is a material poverty component when the word *pouerte* is used, but the sense may be more specialised than that, for example in *Wohunge* 345 where it is *pouerte* that is loved and taught by Christ. This *pouerte* presumably contains all the specialised elements of voluntary poverty.

In the secular texts earthly suffering with a component of poverty is much more prevalent and it often comes about through the agency of men. In the *Brut* the aftermath of battle, for both individuals and nations, is a rich source of poverty vocabulary. Sometimes it is specific that the rich and powerful in defeat have lost their possessions and status and they are called *wrecche* (O 9820; 9836) but all those involved in a conflict can suffer, for example the people of Paris when it is besieged by Arthur and they are starving, and are the *wrecche folk . . . for-hongered* (O 11758). The elements of misery and suffering in poverty vocabulary make it impossible to separate the strands and *hæne*, *earme* and *blæðe* are used in this context. It is interesting in the context of *blæðe* used as a description of the poor who come to the king for alms (above) which includes widows that *blæðe* is also used of women who are made widows by warfare (1190).

Conditions after kings have waged war involve many forms of suffering for the people, and material deprivation can be one form among those, but the experience of battle in itself is described using words from the poverty vocabulary, such as *wrecche*.

### **Earthly suffering and martyrdom**

Earthly suffering that earns spiritual reward in the AB texts can be *earmð*, *wone*, *nowcin*, *wontreaðe* or *meoseise*. In the *Katherine* group *wontreaðe* and *nowcin* are



used of the saints' martyrdom. These words are not used in the AB texts of Christ's suffering on earth, although they are used of suffering in Christ's name. In *St K*. B. 429 it is our *nowcin* that Christ is said to take on when he takes on our flesh and it is interesting that in *St K*. B. 615 one of the qualities of paradise is that there is no *nowcin*, and so Paradise is where there is none of the suffering of the flesh.

In this context it is difficult to know how to classify the martyrdom of the Archbishop of Canterbury which is described in the *Peterborough Chronicle* in the annal for 1011. This is a real event, in which he was killed by the Danes, and his suffering is described as *earmðe*.

### **Suffering in hell and sin**

The only word from the AB category of poverty used of suffering in hell is *wontreaðe*. *Wrecche* is used in other eME texts in association with hell and it is in a general sense present in *SW* 250 where no mouth can tell of hell because of the *wrecchedom* and the *wa* 'woe' of it. *Earm* and *wrecche* are both associated with sin, *earm* in the translation from St Augustine in *AW* and *wrecche* with sinners and the state of sin.

In the *Ormulum* poverty vocabulary is used of the devil's aim to bring man down and lessen him through sin *nipbreþþ*, *cwelleþþ* and *wannseþþ* (i 279/8032-3).

## **Things of the flesh and the opponents of Christ**

### **Earthly existence**

Items from the poverty category are used to indicate the fleshly, as opposed to the spiritual, life. In *HM* *earm* is used. *HM* has a didactic focus on the rewards of a spiritual marriage to Christ instead of an earthly marriage to a man, and *earm* is frequently used in this context. An earthly wife is made *earm* by her marriage and the physical sufferings of pregnancy and childbirth are described as *earm*. Bringing up

children involves many *earm-hwile* 'weary hours' (*HM* 17/12; 18/21). *Earm* is not used in this sense in the other AB texts. *HM* uses *wontreaðe* in this sense once (*HM* 4/3).

*Lah* is commonly used in the AB texts to express the earthly life as opposed to the spiritual, the *heh* life, as is found in other contemporary texts (Shepherd 1991). This involves issues about the earthly and the spiritual nature of man.

In the *Ormulum* the distinction is drawn between the earthly and the spiritual by John the Baptist, who says of himself that he is an earthly man, and full of *unntrumnesse*, glossed as 'infirmity' which collocates once with *wac* (ii 185/18328) and the collocation *flæshess unntrumnesse* is used three times. This brings to mind the *AW* use of *mistrum* where it is used with the sense 'inadequate'. The *Ormulum* uses *wrecche kinde* of our fleshly nature (i 20/663) but, in common with other eME texts, also uses *wrecche* of the soul (ii 204/16022).

The *Ormulum* has a strong emphasis on how Christ was lowered and lessened by his assumption of the body. Poverty vocabulary is used of this process as he was *nipþredd* and *wannsedd* and *lāzhed*, brought down, and lessened and lowered.

### **The body and the soul**

The duality of humanity, the body and the soul, runs throughout the religious texts. *Wrecche* and *wac* are often used of the body and in the constant struggle for mastery the soul is *heh* 'high' while the flesh is *lah*. It is interesting that the nature of the body is frequently expressed in terms that derive from the poverty vocabulary, as this may provide lexical support for the view of Sharon Farmer, among others, that the materially poor were associated with the body. In the AB texts the body's moral weakness is expressed by *wac* and *eðelich*. Christ took on the unclean flesh to save man by his touch and yet the involuntarily poor are associated with this flesh, while the voluntarily poor - the *godes poure* as the anchoresses see themselves - are part of



his spiritual nature.

There is little spiritual content in Lazamon's *Brut* and yet there is one instance that refers to the soul, in which Vortiger refuses to expel the heathen Saxons and is cursed that he will be damned in the world and his *wracche saule* will sink to hell (C 7281). This is similar to the *Poema Morale* in which the damned in hell are referred to as *wrecche* and part of the considerable polysemy that *wrecche* acquires through this period.

### **Hatred for the flesh**

In the Wooing Group there is emphasis on the wretchedness of the speaker, particularly in relation to Christ, and the speaker is frequently described as *wrecche*. In *Wohunge* 285 the *wrecche* condition is that of being beset by the devil, the world and the flesh. The Wooing Group, uniquely among the AB texts, also uses *wrecche* of Christ, where it seems to be an expression of the depths to which Christ was prepared to go, in taking on the flesh, in order to save mankind.

### **Sexuality**

Sexuality is part of the dangers of the flesh. This is addressed in *AW* through a *lah wunde* 'low wound' that spreads up into the heart where is the seat of worldly desire. In *HM* the slaves of the flesh live *lah* 'low' on earth, in servitude to a man, in comparison with the virgins who dwell high in a tower. It is possible here that there are several senses in *lah* as both 'low' in a figurative sense, as sinful, but also 'low' in a physical sense as the genitals are low in the body.

### **The opponents of Christ**

In the saints' lives *earm* is a frequent form of address for the opponents of the martyred saints, particularly for the devils that torment them. *Wrecche* is used this



way in the tales of the martyrs, but is also used of the human agents that oppress them. This may be connected with the use of both *earm* and *wrecche* for sin and sinners.

Christ himself is described as *wrecche* in the Wooing Group but otherwise is not associated with the words from the poverty category which contain these negative connotations. He is frequently associated with *poure* and *pouerte* and it is possible that these comparatively new adoptions into ME carried less polysemy, although the use of *poure* in the sense 'lacking (in)' is found in the AB texts.

## **Low rank**

There is much discussion in the secondary literature about the groups that composed medieval society, both about their nature and the contemporary view of them. It appears that there are as many contemporary views as there are contemporary writers, and even within one writer's work there may be inconsistencies. There is no consensus on whether the poor themselves constituted an order. The poor in these texts are low in the hierarchy and some of the words from the poverty vocabulary carry senses that are applied in the texts to low rank, both in the social sense and in the order of creation.

### **Low in the social hierarchy**

Social hierarchy is seen in terms of higher and lower, obedience is due from *euch lahre his herre* 'every inferior his superior' (AW 102 52b/17). The women who serve the anchoresses in AW wear headcloths low on their foreheads, and are to keep their eyes cast low. When they are to be checked they are to accept their penance, bowing low. This low bowing to a superior is also present in St Margaret's low bow to Christ (*St M. B.* 30/3).

In *St Iulienne* when Eleusius attains the prefecture of Rome to gain St Iulienne's consent to marriage, as she has refused to stoop low to love him, this high rank is

described, perhaps ironically, as *na eðelich þing* 'not an inconsiderable thing' and *eðelich* contains senses of low in rank. *Eðelich* is used in *HM* to describe a husband where his low rank is a factor (*HM* 3/35; 4/18) and in its second instance is a factor in dower negotiations. Marriage contracts contained an element of economic gift exchange (Millet and Wogan-Browne 1992) which extended to becoming a bride of Christ in a nunnery, although this was changing as groups of religious women who held to communal poverty were beginning not to demand this dowry (Pellegrini 2000).

That beggars were low in the hierarchy is clear in *AW* 45a/21 where women are described in three ascending ranks, the lowest the beggar women, then the townswomen and above both the wives of God who are the ladies of heaven. It is interesting that the hierarchy is signified by the amount of worldly goods each carries, the beggars carry bags on their backs, the townswomen a purse but the brides of God nothing. This is part of the central paradox, the most materially deprived are presented carrying the most.

In the *Brut* there is one reference that contains the paradox of the low on earth being the high. There is a reference to Peter who on earth was a *wrecche fissare*, poor fisherman, but who was made the greatest of mortal men (4530).

### **Low in the hierarchy of creation**

*Lah* and *heh* are used as antonyms to describe the hierarchy of creation after the Fall. Man is lower than the angels, the beasts lower than man. Satan falls the lowest and hell is beneath all. This is used in *HM* where the virgin brides of Christ are high, and women married to men are living with the beasts. In the Wooing Group there is the constant thread that the speaker is lying low, addressing Christ who is high but who made himself low on earth. There is the paradox that those low on earth become high in heaven, reversing the earthly hierarchy.



In the *Ormulum* stress is laid on the relationship between the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth, in which Elizabeth is lower, *lahre* than Mary (i 90/2664).

### **Low in the continuum in the phrase meaning 'everyone'**

Phrases which are expressive of the range of people to mean 'everyone' often make use of vocabulary from the rich and poor categories to provide the opposing ends of the continuum.

In the *Peterborough Chronicle* in the annal for 1086 when it is said that William the Conqueror's hunting policy pleased no one, the phrase used is *rice men* and *earme men*. At William's death in the same annal is the comment that death spares no one, and the words used here are *rice men* and *heane*.

In the *Brut* the phrases use *riche* and *pore* (O 5676); *riche* and *hæne* (C 4898); *weolezen* and *weaðlen* (C 215) and *riche* and *weðlen* (C 250).

There is one example in the *Ormulum* in which 'everyone' is expressed as *Pe miccle 7 ec þe littell* (i 278/8001), although this reflects the sense of the context, which is of Herod killing the children.

## **Humility**

Mary at the Annunciation (*HM* 22/19) is described *loke hu lah ha lette hire* 'look how low she valued herself'. This is the self regard, the gaze turned on the unworthy self, that becomes humility. Other words from the vocabulary of poverty are used in this sense although there is sometimes a distinction between the words used of the holy ones associated with Christ, such as Mary, and ordinary Christians.

### **The humility of those connected to Christ**

The *Ormulum* frequently uses the word *meoc*, meek, of Christian humility. This can be shown by angels and holy men although the apostles themselves are not described



as *meoc* though they show Christians how to be so because of their own low status.

Mary sees herself as *lah* and the Apostles on earth are described as *poure ant lah* (SW 256/290). Christ himself is not described as *lah*, and *poure* is the most frequent word applied to Christ. *Poure* is also frequently applied to Mary and is used as an antonym to *þe prude* 'the proud man' who sees himself as *muchel* 'great'. Interestingly *poure* is also frequently used of the real and the allegorical women who are wooed by Christ.

### **The humility of ordinary Christians**

For ordinary Christians humility comes from self knowledge, knowledge of *ure wrecchehead 7 ure wacnesse* 'our wretchedness and weakness' (AW 62b/26). Both these words from the poverty vocabulary are an important element in man's view of himself if he is to have humility and be saved and are the qualities that offer protection against the devil. *Eðelich* and *lahe* are also used of the qualities Christians should see in themselves. The devil cannot detect them if they fool him with their *lahe lif* (AW 76b/20). Virginity alone may not be enough, as wives or widows who *leoteð ham lahe ant eðelich* 'think themselves humble and worthless' (HM 22/5) are better than a proud virgin.

To view oneself *unnorneliz* and to think little of oneself but highly of others is the pathway to Paradise in the *Ormulum*. Lowering oneself on earth leads to heavenly reward, and the words used are *lazhenn* and *nipþrenn* (ii 131/13970). It is particularly important to show meekness by lowering oneself beneath one's inferiors (ii 18/10736), which is reminiscent of the anchoresses in AW in their changed relationship with their kitchen boy.

These words from the poverty vocabulary describe qualities that are associated with the flesh, and it is specifically stated that God put the flesh onto the soul as a weight to bring the soul downwards (AW 38b/7). The link between the words used of

poverty and the flesh is made again.

### ***Poure in heart***

Being *poure* in heart, or in spirit, was not necessarily connected with material poverty or its lack. The idea of wealthy poverty was often given, where the monk who was well suited to his poverty in his cell was rich as in the *Golden Letter* by William of St Thierry (Constable 1996: 148). Being abject or being materially poor in itself is not enough, it is the view of the self that is important.

### **Power and powerlessness**

Although the dictionary definitions do not include the sense 'powerlessness' for these poverty words it was present in the Carolingian opposition of *potens* with *pauper* as identified by Bosl and the sense of 'power' as distinct from 'wealth' which was traced by Godden in his study of the semantic shift in *riche* from OE to eME. Little (1978) argues that 'poor in spirit' had the sense 'weak'. The religious writers formed their metaphors from the prevailing preoccupations of the age. In the earlier period these were concerned with violence and strength, and the early martyrs were the warriors of Christ. In the AB texts this is a factor in the saints' lives. The reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries took place in the context of economic growth and the rise of a cash economy. The emphasis began to shift from the warriors of Christ to voluntary poverty as a weapon against avarice. Contemporary writers, such as Gerhoh of Reichersberg, expressed the battle themselves in these terms.<sup>244</sup> There is discussion in the secondary literature about the qualities present in the concept of voluntary poverty in the religious reform movements in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Burr (2001) sees humility as an element in religious poverty, and in the images of the powerful men in the church walking on pilgrimage barefoot they appear to be adopting the role

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<sup>244</sup> *De quarto vigilia noctis* (MGH, *Libelli de lite*, III, 503-25) 1167



of the *miserabilis personæ* whose definition was not simply one of economic poverty, but which also involved their 'powerless' position, they could be widows, orphans, the blind, the mutilated, those worn down by long illness. The church had a special duty of care towards these people. They were not always without means but were in need of help. They were among the people from whom the mendicant preachers drew their audiences. They were the 'poor' whom the voluntary poor emulated, and yet also despised, in the way that is noted of the peasant who was simultaneously despised and yet simultaneously viewed as particularly close to God (Freedman 1999).

In the act of taking human flesh and coming from heaven to earth, Christ gave up power and took on human weakness. In the *Ormulum* this is made clear, and the vocabulary is that of poverty even though the process is concerned with powerlessness. Christ was born *wrecche child off wrecche kinn* (i 133/3878) and *wrecche* here is very difficult to translate into PDE. There are connotations of the *wrecche* flesh that Christ put on, the *wrecche* poverty that he was born into containing the negative elements of sin. Indeed the devil tempts Christ in the wilderness and in this passage is one of the three times that *usell* is used without close collocation (ii 48/11591) where the idea is that the devil saw Christ as potentially vulnerable to temptation because of his human nature *Forr þatt he sahh himm usell wihht Inn ure mennisscnesse* he saw him as a poor (possibly with the sense 'vulnerable'?) thing in our humanness (ii 48/11591). Christ has changed his state from one of God like power to one of human powerlessness.

The powerlessness that arises in the *Brut* is of a much more earthly kind, but the language used to express it is also that of poverty. Cadwalan threatens Edwin that he will rob him of his kingdom and he will be made *wrecche* (15130). This contrast of powerlessness with a previously kingly state is made twice using *ærm* when Penda wishes to capture Oswy (15762) and of the fate of Agag (8329) where both are reduced from being powerful kings. Lear's own actions in giving away his kingdom to his two daughters results in his lack of power and he calls himself a *wrecche man* in



his new state (C 1735). There may be an element of poverty here in comparison with their previously wealthy state as kings, but, for Lear particularly, it is the power that he has lost.

In defeat Octa and his knights remove their clothing to appear naked before Aurelius to beg for mercy and this act could be seen as putting them among the naked and dependent poor who are no longer a threat and towards whom mercy can be shown (8368).

Lear banishes Cordelia and says she will become *warchen*, destitute, and live in *wansiðe*, misery, (1543). *Wrecche* in OE has an early sense in which the idea of banishment, of being an exile, is in the foreground. This is reduced by the eME period but occasionally there are echoes of it.

### **Christ in poverty**

In AW there is a passage on Christ's life (70b/15 - 71a/17 see appendix) as a lesson *azeines zisceunge* 'against covetousness'. This passage is shaped to present Christ's life in terms of his poverty, poverty as the Christian's weapon against avarice. From his birth to his greatest *pouerte* at the crucifixion the three elements that establish his poverty are his lack of lodging, or his lodging in a *nearow* place, his nakedness and his lack of food and drink. 'He was stripped stark naked on the cross' *steort naket he wes despuillet o þe rode*. The verb *despuillet* is a violent one, that later collects senses of 'pillage'. AW is its first surviving use in English. In this passage Christ is presented as one of the 'naked poor', his poverty is expressed through the embodiment of alms - to feed, clothe and house the poor. His nakedness is at the hands of others and reminiscent of the stripping of the female saints in the saints' lives, where they are exposed to view and become the passive recipients of torment. AW is one of the earliest attestations in English of the shift in the portrayal of Christ at the crucifixion. He had been a warrior triumphant over death, standing with his feet set side by side on

a little shelf. From about 1200 he became a suffering Christ, with his feet nailed one on top of the other without any support (AW 106a/2-3). After 1200 even in the depiction of the Last Supper the royal crown is increasingly replaced by the crown of thorns. This emphasis on Christ's bodily suffering highlights his moment of powerlessness - his *meast pouerte* 'greatest poverty'.

### **Christ's wooing**

Women in the AB texts, particularly AW, sometimes stand for the church or the soul. The adjective applied to them is frequently *poure*. There are various instances in the AB texts of the church being represented as a *poure wummon* 'poor woman' (AW 108b/12) and references to the story of Esther who was raised from a *poure meiden* to a queen (AW 85b/9; 47a/1). The metaphor of Christ wooing the soul in the form of a lady is also present. In AW 105a/12 she is a *gentil poure leafdi* 'poor lady of good family' and her state is *al poure* 'utterly poor'. Christ is the *mihti kinge* 'powerful king' that will rescue her. Here the emphasis seems to be on her powerlessness which contrasts with the might of Christ. The adjective *poure* is attached to the prospective bride of Christ in HM 20/7 where the *measte poure* 'very poorest' is pleasing to him.

There are some specific references to women in the *Ormulum* for example concerning the sacrifice made at the temple after childbirth, where the woman who was poor, *wædle*, was required to give only a small, *litell*, sacrifice (i 269/7769). There is a discussion of the relative natures of male and female children, and the male child has good strength and good deeds, but girls are said to have weak strength, *wac*, and good deeds.

### **Martyrdom**

The parallels between the stripping of the female saints and the stripping of Christ highlight their physical powerlessness at the hands of their tormentors. *Poure* is used



in the saints' lives, and in *St. K* it is used twice of the involuntary poor (B. 18; 21), but the word *poure* is not used of the saints nor is their condition described as *pouerte*. Theirs seems to be a more active death, involving defiance and the defeat of devils. If the suggestion by Little that the Christian model reflects the metaphor of its age is substantive, then this may be because these martyred saints are reflecting an earlier image, a state more of spiritual triumph than the state that *pouerte* expresses.

### **The anchoresses**

The anchoresses' experience is to imitate Christ's life, not just his death as the martyrs do. They are not soldiers of Christ but in common with Christ they are beggars, and their position, like his, is that of *scheome . . . beon itald unwurð 7 beggin as an hearlot* 'shame . . . being accounted worthless and begging like a down-and-out' (AW 96b/16). It is explicit that they have lost the status they had before and should be happy if they are treated arrogantly by Sluri, the cook's boy, who washes and wipes dishes in the kitchen (AW 103a/2-4). They have left their earthly power behind and their powerless state is more glorious if those who were previously below them on earth are above them.

### **The involuntary poor**

The involuntary poor are not necessarily the naked poor who receive alms, but those who are at the poor end of society. In many instances in the AB texts the vocabulary of poverty is used in a specialised, Christian sense. The glimpses of the economically poor are few and many instances are general rather than individual. In a passage in AW (22b/1)<sup>245</sup> there is a description of the third kind of flatterer, who praises the evil person and his evil deed. In this instance the evil deed is bad treatment of *his poure men* 'his poor men' by a *cniht*. The word *poure* here could refer to material poverty but seems to be a reference to the men over whom the *cniht* has power - they are in a tied

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<sup>245</sup> Ives (1934) considers this treatment of the *cheorl* to be in the proverbial tradition.



relationship to him, are his poor men and are referred to in the next line as *cheorl*.

This citation is given in the OED to illustrate 'Churl' sense 3. 'A tenant in pure villeinage; a serf, a bondman.' This use of *poure* could also contain OED 'Poor' sense 6. 'Such, or so circumstanced, as to excite one's compassion or pity; unfortunate, hapless' which has its earliest citation from *Lazamon*, but is not illustrated with any citations from the AB texts. The sense of being low in the hierarchy and in a powerless, vulnerable position seems to be the major component here.

### **Vagrancy and the dissembling beggar**

*Hearlot* appears to be the only item in the AB poverty vocabulary that has this component of vagrancy, and disapproval, in context. In the *MED* *hearlot* has sense 2(a) A professional male entertainer; buffoon, jester, story-teller, actor, pantomimist; (b) a female entertainer, an actress, etc.; (c) a trifler, parasite. The earliest citations are for (c) from Chaucer, (a) and (b) from 1400 on. These may appear to be peripheral senses to the poverty category, but it is interesting to note that OE *loddere* from the *TOE* poverty field had similar connotations. These qualities may not carry the association of 'powerlessness' but they do of being 'without power' as of people who are themselves outside the mainstream of their society, not settled in a locality and living off, rather than contributing to, the economic process.

AW presents a picture of a *hearlot* as a 'dissembling beggar' but this is not the whole sense in the AB texts, as it also has the 'material poverty' sense of a beggar who begs for a living and is associated with shame.<sup>246</sup> Neither the OED nor the MED use the word 'dissembling' in their definition, but include the senses 'idle rogue, vagabond, beggar' (MED sense 1a.) and 'vagabond, rogue, beggar, rascal' (OED sense 1) so including the deceptive element of a beggar who could work but who chooses not to.

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<sup>246</sup> AW 96b/16 and the poor who beg at the gate AW 111b/26

## Dependence

*Helples* carries this sense and is used of fatherless children, unable to support themselves in the world. By metaphor this is the situation of Christians on earth, whose strength comes from Christ and who are unable to support themselves without his strength. This dependence on others is a component in the 'poverty' of the anchoresses in *AW* where all they live on is provided through the alms of a 'friend'. This is also an element in the condition of the *miserabilis personæ* for whom the church had a special duty of care.

## Peripheral senses

These are the senses that are on the periphery of the concept of poverty, or may not be part of it at all, but which are attached to words which carry some senses that are within the category. There is one instance of *heane* in its negative to mean 'bravely' or 'not shamefully' used of Cynewulf defending himself in the annal for 755 which I have not included.

## Contempt

In the *Brut* the use of *hæne* with the verb *halden* has the sense 'contempt' and there are four instances of this, all used of a person plus one with the same sense used of the heathen religion but using the verb *iwurðen*. The use of *wrecche* sometimes seems to include an element of contempt particularly when used of the defeated, or those who are predicted soon to be defeated.

## Constraint

It is interesting that the condition of defeat for the powerful often involves being put in bonds, and this can also draw on words with a poverty component, such as *armliche benden* (C 298) and *narwe ibunden* (C 13483). The experience here is both miserable

and confining and the confinement of poverty is an element throughout, echoed later by the development of *straitness* which the Glasgow *Thesaurus* materials identifies as recorded in use from 1340.

The idea of being 'hard pressed' comes here too, with *narwe biþrong* (O 4704).

### **To defeat**

In the *Ormulum* *nipþrenn* carries this sense.

### **Desperate**

This is a use of *wræcchelic* to describe Cadwalan's lust for venison in the story of Brien cutting off his own flesh to feed the king. The translation here is not easy.

### **Disapproval**

Strong disapproval is expressed by *wrecche* in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. It is applied to the sacking by the Vikings of churches in Ireland in 684 and the sacking of Lindisfarne in 793. It is also used in the annal for 1127 to describe the grant of the Abbacy to the pluralist Henry.

### **Frivolous**

The senses in the *MED* for *hearlot* are jesters, entertainers and triflers. These appear to be peripheral senses to the poverty category, but it is interesting to note that OE *loddere* from the *TOE* poverty field had similar connotations.

### **Illness**

*Unntrumnesse* carries this sense in the *Ormulum*.



**To lessen/wane**

In the AB texts *wone* carries this sense as does *wannsenn* in the *Ormulum*.

**Low/to lower**

This is the literal sense of *lah* in both the AB texts and the *Ormulum*.

**Mean, of no repute**

In the *Ormulum* *unnwurrþ* carries this sense.

**Plain and simple**

This is carried by *unnorne* in the *Ormulum*.

**Sensual pleasure**

*Eðelich* has physical components and there is one instance in HM 5/15 where *eðelich* is usually glossed as 'worthless' but which could equally be used in its sense of 'sensual pleasure': *eðelich delit of an hondhwile* 'momentary sensual pleasure' where this refers to sexual activity.

**Small of things or space.**

*Littel* carries this sense in the *Ormulum* as does *narrwe/naru* in the *Ormulum* and the AB texts.

**Strict**

The *Ormulum* has additional uses of *narrwe* of the narrow, or strict path that leads to God(i 215/6208; i 321/9202).

### **Unleavened Bread**

*pearf*- becomes *tharrf* in the sense of unleavened bread in the *Ormulum* (i 32/997; i 53/1588).

### **Unpleasant**

There is one instance of *zeomere* with the sense 'unpleasant' when Cador suggests to Arthur that they should prepare *zeomere spelles* for the invading Romans.

### **Without good**

This sense of *godles* is close to the senses of hell, sin and the opponents of Christ.

### **Wasteland**

Although *westi* is an apparently ephemeral member of the AB poverty category, and indeed of the 'poverty' category in eME as a whole, it carries two central senses, 'material poverty' and 'lacking in'. Its sense 'wasteland' is peripheral to the AB category 'poverty' but central to *westi* and it is this that survives.

### **Young**

In the *Ormulum* there is the sense 'young' which is carried by *littel*.

## Conclusion

### The Changes in the Lexis

From the OE to the eME period significant changes take place in the lexis that expresses poverty. In the OE category the central items are words connected to *þearf* and *wædle* but both these are supplanted through the late OE to eME period by another OE word from outside the category, *wrecche*. *Wædle* does not appear in many additional categories and it dies out whereas *þearf* narrows into its sense of 'to need to' in the sense of 'it is necessary to' before it too disappears. *Wrecche* is a word which comes in with a great deal of existing polysemy and it is not clear what the factors are in this shift. It does express some related concepts, such as emotional and physical distress and discomfort, but it also carries, and accumulates, elements of wickedness and damnation. The arrival of the French loan *poure* appears in its early use to be with the plain sense 'material poverty' but it relatively quickly becomes used not just of the materially poor but of the spiritually poor. It is possible that the increasing polysemy and association of *wrecche* with negative elements made it not only ambiguous but also undesirable when used of religious poverty and Christ.

### The Category

The category that emerges from these texts has two central concepts which co-exist and which are almost mirror images of each other yet which share the same lexical expression. These are the two concepts of involuntary and voluntary poverty. Things which are shameful and demeaning in involuntary poverty become transformed into virtues if they are part of voluntary poverty.



The attributes for these concepts are the same, but their values are opposites. Among the attributes are: embodiment; material possessions; status; potency; clothing; food; moral value.

The value of the embodiment for involuntary poverty is the flesh, there is a strong connotation of physicality in the vocabulary, which reinforces the observations made by Farmer that the poor were associated with the body (Farmer 2002). The value for the embodiment of voluntary poverty is the spirit. For the voluntary poor their poverty is a spiritual attribute.

While it would appear that both kinds of poor are without material possessions, the value for the involuntary poor is that they are desirous of them, and are portrayed as in need of them, whereas the voluntary poor are rejecting them.

The value of status for the involuntary poor is low, while the value for the voluntary poor is high.

The potency value of the involuntary poor is weak, they have no power and are dependent on others and in need of help. The voluntary poor are powerful spiritually and although their manifestation on earth is through humility and self effacement they are the manifestation of a powerful religious force. There are instances when powerlessness is foregrounded in the frame of the words for 'poor' even though this is not present in the dictionary definitions.

The moral value of the involuntary poor is of worthlessness and evil. The connotations of *wrecche* are strong here, and it is used of souls damned in hell. This aspect presumably strengthens in the following centuries after the eME period as hostility and distrust of the poor increases. The moral value of the voluntary poor is of

good and worth, and the connotations in the vocabulary, of the negative values, may be a factor in language change.

The clothing of the involuntary poor is tattered and worn, while the clothing of the voluntary poor is plain and simple. Parallel values apply to the food. Food for the involuntary poor is provided by handouts and leftovers, while the voluntary poor eat plainly and simply. This is the one attribute in which the vocabulary is not shared, as, for example, *unnorne* does not seem to be applied to the clothing or food of the involuntary poor.

### **Peripheral senses**

When I constructed the models of the peripheral, or additional senses, I was surprised at how few alternatives there were for arrangement on the page if the words were to be connected in any coherent way. These relationships are of a kind which it is not possible to discover from consulting dictionary definitions alone. Sylvester notes the growth of an ironic dimension in the notion *Gift/present* and this kind of change is to do with background assumptions (2004: 206). This kind of encyclopaedic knowledge is more likely to be in evidence in context and it is from the contextual uses of the words that the models of the peripheral senses were made.

The peripheral senses are important as they are present to a greater or lesser degree in the mind of the speaker or writer when the words in the category are used. In many ways these are the elements in the frames which are the hardest for us to recognise in reading the texts. Clearly we maintain a passive vocabulary which enables us to read texts written in the past, and it is a truism to say that our reading cannot be that of a contemporary speaker as elements of the information are lost to us even though we 'understand' the words. This is the kind of information that some of these peripheral senses may give us, even though sketchily.



The peripheral senses that are identified for the category as it exists in the *TOE* are more comprehensive than those for the eME corpus that I have examined, as the *TOE* covers a wider and more diverse corpus. Nonetheless there are some interesting parallels and differences.

Some of the similarities are not surprising. There are related concepts in both the *TOE* and the eME categories which concern adversity, affliction and trouble as well as the associated emotional states of misery and distress. The *TOE* connections with shame, disgrace and humiliation are mirrored in the eME category by words such as *nibprenn* and *lah*. The concept of constraint is interesting and present in both categories. In the *TOE* *nearones* brings narrowness and scantness of space, a physical strait, and this is echoed in the eME category by the use of poverty vocabulary being applied to imprisonment and bonds. This element is reflected in the subsequent adoption in the poverty category of *straitness*. The eME expression of the concept of plain and simple in connection with voluntary poverty has a rather distant echo in the *TOE* category with the use of *nacod* to signify plainness and simplicity in language.

Some of the similarities are more surprising. Both categories have a connection to evil, the *TOE* to moral evil and depravity, and the eME category through *wrecche* in particular and its use in references to people who are damned in hell. On the other hand both categories also have connections to frivolity although through different lexical items. These connections, particularly when expressed through different words, seem to indicate some stability in the concept which continues through changes in lexis.



## Appendices

### Individual Words

#### *wonten*

I have not included this and all instances appear to carry the sense 'lacking in'. A typical usage is *wonti ei of his limen* 'missing one of his limbs' in *HM* 17/4.

This overlaps with *wone* in the sense 'lacking in' and it may be that in the AB texts *wone* carries connotations of poverty as well as 'lacking in' while *wont* is restricted to 'lacking in' and its use in the poverty sense is a later development. In the *OED* and the *MED* the sense 'penury' is illustrated with later citations. The *OED* of the noun 'want' has 3a 'The state of lacking the necessities of life; penury; destitution' first citation 1340-70 *Alex. & Dind.* 857; the *MED* of the noun 'want' has a. 'The state of penury, want; also a shortage or lack of something' first citation 1400 *Cursor Vsp.* A. 3.

This is therefore not included.

## AW Passage

Corpus p. 133 f. 70b line 15 - f. 71a line 17

Azeines 3isceunge is his muchele pouerte þe weox eauer up on him se lengre se mare, for þa he wes iboren earst. þe þ wrahte þe eorðe. ne fond nawt on eorðe swa muche place as his lute lome mahte beon ileid up on. Swa nearow wes þ stude. þ unneaðe his moder 7 iosep seten þrin. ant swa ha leiden him on heh up in a cecche wið clutes biwrabbet as þ godspel seið. Pan nis eum inuoluit. þus feire he wes ischrud þe heouenliche schuppent þe schrudeð þe sunne. Her efter þe poure meiden of heouene fostrede him 7 fedde wið hire lute milc as meiden deh to habben. þis wes muche pouerte. ah mare com þrefter. for lanture þezet he hefde fode as feol to him. 7 i stude of in.^ his cradel herbearhede him. Seoððen as he meande him.^ nefde he hwer he mahte his heued huden. filius hominis non habet ubi capud suum reclinet. Þus poure he wes of in. of mete he wes so neodful.^ þ þa he hefde i ierusalem o palmsunnedei al dei ipreachet. 7 hit neolechede niht.^ he lookede abuten hit seið i þe godspel. 3ef ei walse cleopien him to mete oðer to herbearhe.^ ah nes þer nan. ant swa he wende ut of þe muchele burh.^ in to Bethanie. to Marie hus 7 to marthen. þer as he eode mid his deciples sum chearre. ha breken þe eares bi þe wei 7 gnuddeden þe curnles ut betweenen hare honden 7 eten for hunger. 7 weren þeruore swiðe icalenget. ah alre meast pouerte comzet her efter. For steort naket he wes despuilet o þe rode. Þa he meande him of þurst. weater ne mahte he habben 3et þ meast wunder is of al þe brade eorðe ne moste he habben a greot forte deien up on. Þe rode hefde a fot oðer lute mare. 7 þ wes to his pine. Hwen þe worldes wealdent walde beo þus poure. unbileuet he is þe luueð to muchel ant 3isceð worldes weole ant wunne.

Against covetousness there is His great poverty which grew always greater as His life went on, for when he was first born, He who had made the earth did not find on it a space great enough for his little body to be laid upon it. So cramped was His birthplace that it was with difficulty that His Mother and Joseph found room to sit, and so they placed Him up off the ground in a manger, wrapped about with pieces of cloth as the gospel says: *She wrapped him up in swaddling clothes*. Thus finely was He clothed, the heavenly Creator who had clothed the sun. And then the poor maiden of heaven fostered him and fed Him with her little milk such as a maiden must have had. This was great poverty. But greater was to come. For at least He still had the food that was proper to Him and instead of an inn His cradle lodged Him. But later, as He lamented He had nowhere to shelter His head. *The son of man hath not where to lay his head*. Thus poor was He in the matter of lodging. In that of food, He was so needy that on Palm Sunday, when He had been preaching in Jerusalem all day, and night was approaching, He looked around Him to see whether anyone would invite Him to a meal or offer Him shelter, but there was none, and so He went out of the great city into Bethania, to the house of Mary and Martha. On another occasion, as He walked with His disciples, they were so hungry that they broke off some ears of corn by the way and crushed out the grain with their hands and ate it, and were seriously reproved on this account.<sup>3</sup> But the greatest poverty of all was still to follow, for on the cross He was stripped stark naked. When He complained of thirst, He was allowed no water. And further, most striking thing of all, of the whole broad earth He might not have any stretch of ground to die upon. The Cross took up a foot of the earth's space, or a little more, and that to increase his pain. Since



the Ruler of the world willingly became as poor as this, what a miscreant is he who covets and loves over-much its wealth and its happiness.

## *Wohunge*

EETS 241 p 28/317- 30/369

p. 276 Iesu mi liues luue riche ar tu as lauerd in heuene 7 in eorðe. 7 tah poure  
f.130 þi bicom for me. westi 7 wrecched Poure þu born was of þe meiden  
þi moder. for þenne iþi burð tid in al þe burh of belleem ne fant tu hus  
lewe þer þine nesche childes limes inne mihte reste. Bot in a waeles hus  
imiddes þe strete. Poure þu wunden was irattes 7 i clutes 7 caldeliche  
denet in a beastes cribbe. Bote swa þu eldere wex. swa þu pourere was.  
For i þi chilhad hafdes tu þe pappe to þi fode. 7 ti moder readi hwen  
þu pappe 3erndes. Bote hwen þu eldere was. þu þ fuhel ofluht. fisch iflod  
folc on eorðe fedes. þoledes for wone of mete moni hat hungre as clerkes  
witerliche in godspel reden. 7 tu þ heuene 7 eorðe 7 al þis world  
wrahtes. nauedes in al þis world hwer þu o þin ahen þi heued mihtes reste.  
Bot<e> baðe 3ung 7 eldre alle Gate þu hafdes hwer þu mihtes wrihe þine  
banes. Ah atte laste of þi lif hwen þu for me swa rewliche hengedes on rode.  
ne hafdes in al þis world hwer wið þ blisfule blodi bodi þu mihtes hule  
7 huide. 7 swa nu swete lefmon poure þu þe self was. 7 te poure þu  
raðeste cheas. pouerte þu luuedes. pouerte þu tahtes. 7 3iuen þu haues  
echeliche þin endelese blisse. til alle þ clenli for þi luue mesaise 7  
pouerte wilfulliche þolien. A hu schulde i beo riche. 7 tu mi leof swa  
poure? for þi swete iesu crist wile i beo poure for þe. as tu was for þe  
luue of me. for to beo riche wið þe i þin eche blisse. for wið pouerte 7  
wið wa schal mon wele buggen. A iesu swete iesu leue þ te 7c. Bote  
pouerte wið menske is eað for to þolien. Ah þu mi lef for mi luue wið al þi  
pouerte was schomeliche heaned.

Jesus, my life's love, you are rich as Lord in heaven and earth, and yet you became for me poor, destitute and wretched. Poor you were born of the maiden, your mother, for in your birth-time in all the city of Bethlehem you found not house-shelter where your tender child's limbs might rest, but (was born) in a wall-less house in the middle of the street. Poor you were, wrapped in rags and clouts, and coldly lodged in a beast's crib. But as you grew older you became even poorer; for in your childhood you had the breast for your food, and your mother was ready when you wanted the breast; but when you became older, you, that feeds the fowls in (their) flight, fish in the flood, and people on the earth, suffered for lack of meat many a sharp (pang of) hunger, as clerks indeed read in the Gospel; and you that shaped the heaven and earth, and all this world, had not in all this world of your own where you might rest your head; but both young and older always you had (not) wherewith you might cover your bones. But at the last (period) of your life, when you for me so piteously did hang on the cross, you had not, in all this world, wherewith you might cover and hide your blissful bloody body. And so my sweet beloved one, poor you yourself was; and you choose the rather to be poor, for poverty you did love, and poverty did teach (enjoin); and you have given perpetually your everlasting bliss to all those that willingly endure, (wholly) cleanly for your love, hardships and poverty. Ah! why should I be rich and you, my beloved, so poor? Therefore, sweet Jesus Christ, will I be poor for you, as you were for the love of me, so that I may be rich with you in your eternal bliss; for with poverty and with woe shall happiness be purchased. Ah! Jesus, sweet Jesus, grant that the love of you be all my delight. But poverty with honour is easy to endure; but you, my beloved, wholly for my love,



with all your poverty was shamefully ill-treated;

## The Remodelling of the Category

In the *Glasgow Historical Thesaurus* materials, few of the OE words from the *TOE* category **15.01.06 Poverty, indigence** survive far beyond the OE period. The words that survive OE and subsequently enter and leave up to 1300 are:

Word	Date 1	Date 2	Date 3
wædle/wædl	OE	1205	-
wane/wana	OE	1250	-
armþ/earmþ	OE	1275	-
wanspeed/wansped	OE	1400	-
povert	-	1175	1550
wandreth	-	1175	1680
wandred	-	1200	1400
misease	-	1200	1490
need	-	1200	
orcost	-	1225	-
lowness	-	1225	-
poorness	-	1275	1661
default	-	1290	1494
unwealth	-	1300	1412
mischief	-	1300	1433
mister	-	1300	1786
poverty	-	1300	

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